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HOW I MADE:
PAPER BOAT FISHERMAN
 Discover how photographer Amr El Saadany created this fun composite in Photoshop

IN THIS ISSUE...



APRIL MADDEN
 Editor

COVER IMAGE

ADAM VARGA
www.vargaa.com

US-based concept artist and matte painter Adam Varga was the perfect choice for our in-depth feature on digital painting techniques. Find out how he created our amazing cover image in his start to finish guide on p26.



Painting is possibly the world's oldest artform, yet with Photoshop in the mix it's still bang up to date. In this issue, artist Adam Varga gives us the lowdown on the complete painting process. In his guide on p26 you'll learn everything you need to know about using Photoshop as a painting tool, mastering tools and techniques that will take your art to the next level (They're also very handy skills for retouchers, photo editors and composers too!).

There's more painting on p36 as Abeer Malik takes us through the process of creating a beautiful portrait. But we're not just one-trick ponies; there are plenty of other art styles for you to explore in this issue. On p44 Rodrigo Marinelli takes us through the process of creating dramatic lighting in a photo composite, while on p60 Aleksei Pushilin explains how to integrate a 3D model that you've made in Blender into a photo, using your Photoshop skills to create perfect realism.

For those of you who have recently graduated and begun to enter the wide world of the creative industries, we've rounded up 15 insider secrets from industry professionals that will help you get your career off to a flying start, whether you plan to work in a studio or go freelance. Find this essential guide to career success on p70.

Plus we have interviews with Photoshop pro Emi Haze (p10), Swedish design studio Snask (p18) and arch-vis supremo Souheil Abdessalem (p86). Meanwhile, a range of artists including the man behind the Everyday Project, Mike Winkelmann (p16), take us through some of their artworks and how they created them.

With 2015's Adobe Max just days away at the time of going to press (it's on from 3-7 October), we're getting really excited about Photoshop Fix. The app previously codenamed Project Rigel was revealed at Apple's September keynote. Check out p8 to see what we know so far. Enjoy the issue!

INSIDE:

DIGITAL PAINTING



COMPOSITES



TYPOGRAPHY



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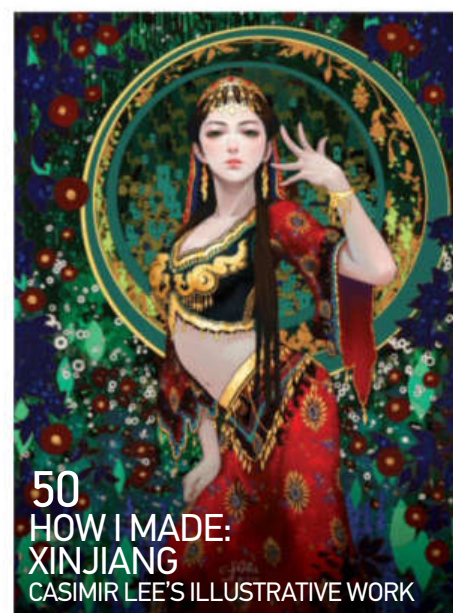
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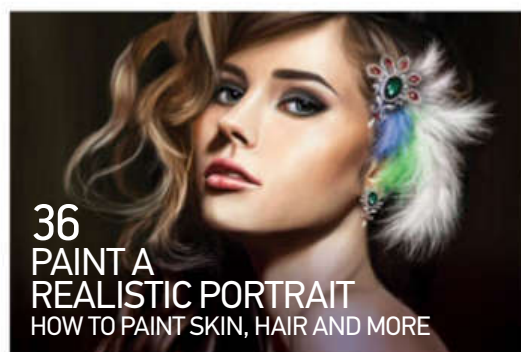
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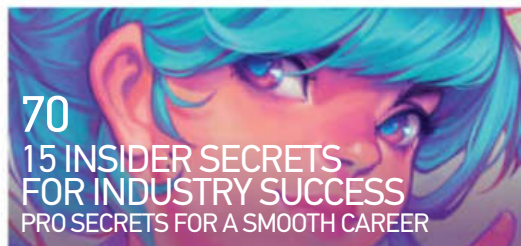
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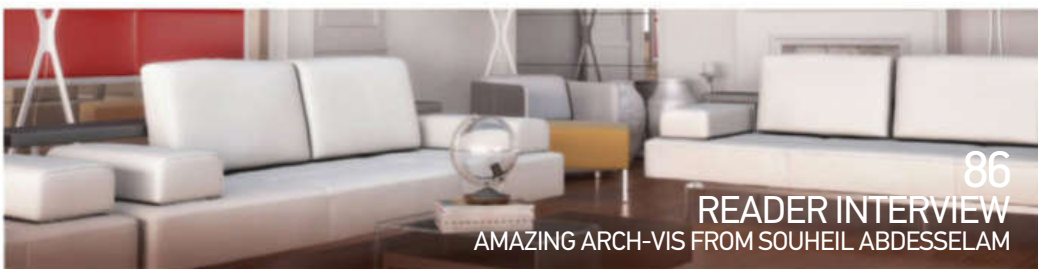
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ADVANCED PHOTOSHOP PRO PANEL

MEET THE PROFESSIONALS SHARING THEIR PHOTOSHOP
EXPERTISE AND TECHNIQUES IN THIS ISSUE



© Neil Duerden



NEIL DUERDEN

www.neilduerden.co.uk

Listen to the client and take on board their comments, then consider them. Sometimes they make sense and other times they can be simply ludicrous! If they make sense in both a creative and commercial way, then simply change the piece. If they don't, then don't be afraid to politely discuss your concerns with the client.

■ Neil shares more expert tips in his typography tutorial on p52



© Abeer Malik



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Know what you're studying. Do not practice the same thing again and again; it will only make you perfect at a single aspect of painting. Try to focus on different subjects like colours, perspective, light, etc. And practice one thing at a time. Give yourself time; you can't learn everything in one day. The most important thing is to have fun with your painting!

■ Discover more painting advice from Abeer Malik in her portrait tutorial on p36



© Adam Varga



ADAM VARGA

www.vargaa.com

Creating a dystopian scene in Photoshop is a fun way to depict what Earth may look like after a major disaster. When mashing images together, pay close attention to how trees grow around structures, such as in Chernobyl. Gather images of construction sites and Lasso them over modern architecture to show structural damage, while painting with the Burn tool to show fire damage.

■ Explore more scenic painting techniques in Photoshop in Adam's feature on p26



RODRIGO MARINELLI
rodrigo_marinelli.prosite.com

When I start to create a new image I always use the blend modes. With them you can create endless combinations. In this image, to give an under-the-sea appearance I made a blue layer and put it in Color mode at 40% Opacity. With this you can change the colour harmony of your image with only one layer.

■ Get more pro compositing tricks from Rodrigo Marinelli in his compositing tutorial on p44

“Do not practice the same thing again and again; it will only make you perfect at a single aspect of painting”

ABEER MALIK / [HTTPS://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/ABEERSARTWORK](https://www.facebook.com/ABEERSARTWORK)

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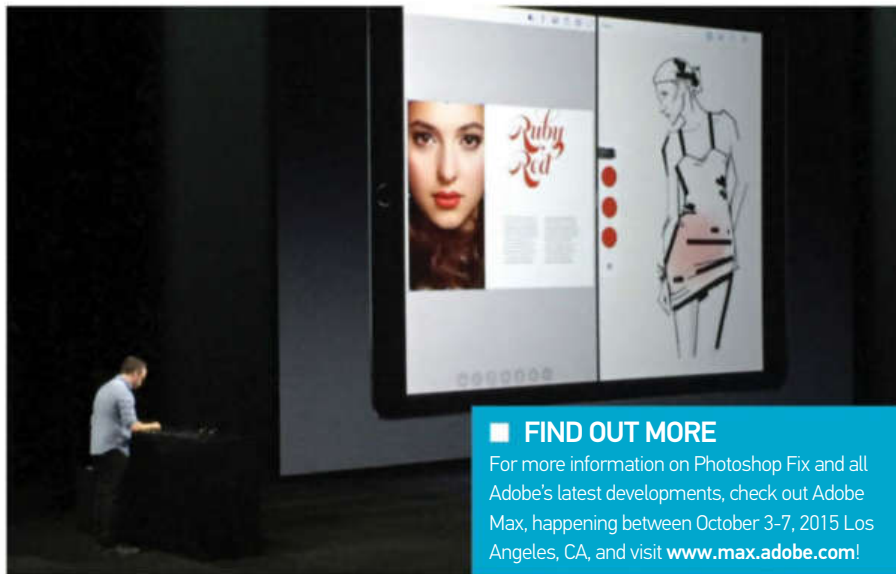


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PHOTOSHOP FIX REVEALED AT APPLE KEYNOTE

AS THE IPAD PRO IS LAUNCHED BY APPLE, WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR ADOBE AND ITS CREATIVE CLOUD FAMILY OF APPS?



FIND OUT MORE

For more information on Photoshop Fix and all Adobe's latest developments, check out Adobe Max, happening between October 3-7, 2015 Los Angeles, CA, and visit www.max.adobe.com!

September has come to be Apple's month of choice when it comes to the revealing of new products and updates that will be released in time for Christmas. And often with the announcement of upgrades for the ever-popular iPad comes something new and exciting from Adobe too.

The latest Keynote event was no different, with a whole host of new updates to the Apple Watch, as well as a brand new member of the iPad family, updates to the Apple TV and the reveal of the new Apple Pencil, the company's first ever stylus for use with its tablet. Adobe too revealed a new product, in the form of Photoshop Fix, a new app.

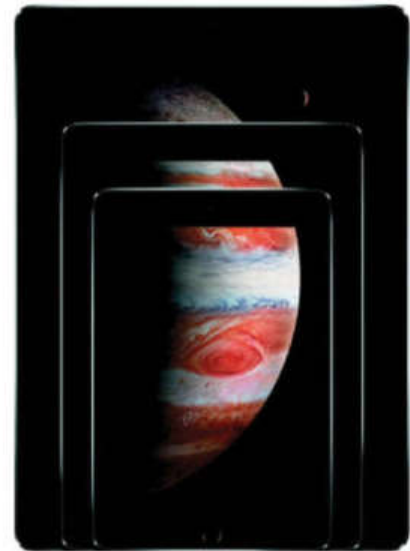
Photoshop Fix is a new retouching app for the Creative Cloud family, and it was built with the new iPad Pro in mind. The improved processor combined with the introduction of the Apple Pencil make the latest iPad undoubtedly the best one yet for creating digital art on, and Photoshop Fix capitalises on this.

Adobe's Eric Snowden has claimed that this new iPad made the app "insanely fast" and stated that the device can handle up to 50-megapixel images. Photoshop Fix is there for any retouching that an iPad image might need before you import it into Photoshop on your desktop, and it has some features that the desktop Photoshop doesn't; for example, Photoshop Fix can recognise facial features, and make simple tweaks to these features such as giving a subject more of a smile, as Snowden demonstrated.

The most intriguing thing about the new app though is how it fits into the rest of the Creative Cloud family; the introduction of the iPad Pro and its new features will enhance interactivity between the Adobe apps, particularly the new Multitasking mode, which Snowden claimed was amazing, and just "like having two screens". There's no need to save your work as you go with the Creative Cloud apps either, as simply beginning a creation is enough for your device to remember it with the non-destructive editing that Adobe has been championing for a while now. Adobe hopes that this is the end of having to use the Camera Roll in your iPad, and that Creative Cloud members will instead refer back to CC for importing pictures and assets between apps. There's also the introduction of TypeKit fonts with this update too, which is certainly good news for professional designers and artists, among others.

This is by no means intended as a step away from the desktop versions of Adobe's apps though, as Adobe has clearly stated lately that "the mobile apps are powerful in their own right, but gain even more impact through deep integration" with desktop programs such as Photoshop CC and InDesign CC. As Snowden also mentioned, this new age of Adobe mobile creativity apps are for everyone, not just the pros. "These apps are powerful [enough] for professionals yet easy enough for anyone to use," Snowden said as he closed his talk.

“The introduction of the iPad Pro and its new features will enhance interactivity between the Adobe apps, particularly the new Multitasking mode”



THE IPAD PRO

Apple used to have a reputation for being the first to the market with a revolutionary idea. Things have changed since the days of Steve Jobs though and what Apple are more renowned for these days is releasing products that are inspired by others, and often trumping them in terms of style and efficiency. Apple might not be the first to market anymore, but they still dominate and in the eyes of the consumer, they're the ultimate across the board, technology-wise.

The iPad Pro is no different. Its new A9X chip means that this iPad is faster and more competent at multitasking, and with an incredible new resolution of 2732 x 2048, that gives a pixel density of 264.68; roughly equal to 5.6 million pixels. It's more equipped to deal with 4K than previous models, and perhaps unsurprisingly, it's the only tablet thus far that the Apple Pencil works with.

HOW DOES APPLE PENCIL COMPARE TO OTHER IPAD STYLUSES?

THE APPLE PENCIL IS EXACTLY WHAT YOU'D EXPECT FROM THE COMPANY: STYLISH, MINIMAL AND PERHAPS THE ULTIMATE STYLUS FOR YOUR TABLET

Steve Jobs was famously against the introduction of a stylus for use with any of Apple's touchscreen products, let alone the iPad. But Apple has gone against its founder and introduced the Apple Pencil, a brand new tool for drawing that could transform the way that iPads are seen by artists and designers.

The Apple Pencil certainly fits in with the aesthetic that we've come to expect from Apple; it's sleek, white and chargeable from the top, and it's a gadget that Apple hopes will become the stylus of choice for any designer looking to use Adobe's Creative Cloud apps among others. It's specifically designed for use with the iPad Pro, which is being brought more in line with the Microsoft Surface range with the latest keyboard addition, and Apple boasts that you can apply brushstrokes to single pixels on the mammoth new display of the device.

The benefits of the Apple Pencil are obvious. It was designed with the iPad Pro in mind, and it uses the same charge port, but beyond that, it allows you to create different pressures when drawing, in a radically different way to the pressure-sensitive styluses we've seen before. The shading option too – simply tilt the pencil to the side – looks fantastic and opens up possibilities for artists, and the high-responsive, lag-less experience that Apple are



Designed for creatives: The Apple Pencil has been designed specifically with artists and creatives in mind, so we are expecting great functionality and accuracy from it

declaring with this release is certainly appealing, especially when you think of some of the more elite stylus brands out there with speed issues.

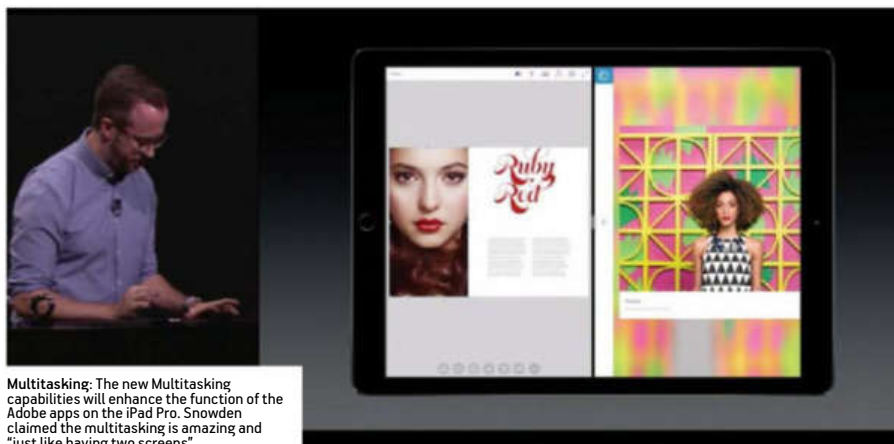
How the Apple Pencil compares for artists with other styluses though, during actual, physical drawing, largely remains to be seen just yet. The precision and accuracy of the Apple Pencil is reportedly astounding, apparently much more impressive than other styluses, but then this is to be

expected, given that the Apple Pencil has been designed with creatives and artists in mind, and not just anyone wanting more ease of use with their tablet.

If Steve Jobs had known quite how far the tablet would evolve, perhaps he wouldn't have been quite so anti-stylus. It's a must for the iPad Pro, given its size, but it also opens doors to those who wish to be artistic with Apple products.

HOW WILL PHOTOSHOP FIX FIT INTO THE CROSS-APP CC WORKFLOW?

THE MULTITASKING OF THE IPAD PRO COMES TO ADOBE WITH A BRAND NEW APP IN THE CREATIVE CLOUD FAMILY



Multitasking: The new Multitasking capabilities will enhance the function of the Adobe apps on the iPad Pro. Snowden claimed the multitasking is amazing and "just like having two screens"

Interconnectivity is key for Adobe these days, and each of the Creative Cloud apps are intended to seamlessly cross over between each other to create one ultimate designing experience. The introduction of a new photo-fixing app unlocks so many doors, as Eric Snowden demonstrated at the Apple keynote.

It's perhaps obvious to see Photoshop Fix as the first port of call for your creative experience; retouching your subjects before you build around them is a familiar process to many, and apps such as Comp, Sketch and Photoshop Mix can all help create digital art.



Photoshop Fix is a simple enough app in principle. It perhaps isn't the most revolutionary, but it will ignite your excitement about what you can do on the iPad Pro – the 5.6 million pixel display will certainly display your images nicely – and it's an app that will make life easier for you, when working on the go.



www.emihaze.com
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REDEFINING HUMAN FORM AND NATURE

EMI HAZE'S PASSION FOR ART IS CLEAR TO SEE THROUGH THE WAY HE COMBINES PHOTOGRAPHY AND HANDMADE TEXTURES, PRODUCING UTTERLY STUNNING IMAGERY

Developing a unique style of art creation has brought Emi Haze instant success and has allowed him to work on projects for companies such as Adobe.

Haze's artwork encompasses the deconstruction and reconstruction of humanity, while maintaining elegance. Bringing forth an organic yet abstract touch gives his work a natural and distinctive charm that changes the way we view humanity. Haze captures the human spirit and soul in a vibrant and sometimes colourful way.

HOW DID YOU DISCOVER DIGITAL ART?

I began with painting and drawing, while attending an art high school. Then I discovered digital art and I connected this great passion of mine with technology, earning a degree in graphic design and commercial art at the Design Institute Palladio in Verona.

HOW DO YOU FIND YOUR MODELS?

To find the subjects of my work, in many cases I collaborate with professional photographers, while other times I use stock image sites.

YOU UTILISE THE HUMAN FORM IN SEVERAL OF YOUR PIECES. IS THERE A MESSAGE THAT YOU ARE TRYING TO CONVEY BY DOING SO?

In my work the human being melds with nature and its four elements to give birth to my inner world – ethereal and imaginative – hanging in the balance between reality, dream and fantasy. A harmony that binds man and nature in a perfect way and which unfortunately nowadays seems to be a utopia.

HOW DO YOU CREATE THE WONDERFUL TEXTURES IN YOUR ART?

Before moving into digital art, I started with drawing and painting; then later moved into graphics. I always loved the gesture and warmth of the lines of a sketch, in a stroke with acrylic or oil paint, or in the splashes of watercolour and ink! So today when I start developing an image I try to include my manual

skill in the flow and in the use of colour, digitally importing it into my artwork. I combine in a single image, hundreds of Photoshop layers with several graphic elements and textures.

YOU MENTION ON YOUR SITE THAT MUSIC IS IMPORTANT. HOW DOES IT HELP WHEN WORKING ON A NEW PIECE?

Yes, music is key in my creative process. Listening to my favourite artists like Sigur Rós, Radiohead and Björk helps me to immerse myself in my creative world and to have set the right inspirational mood to develop new work.

The entire art world is a fundamental source of inspiration in the creative process – pictorial art, photography, cinema and fashion. For me everything has its own importance – images, textures, sounds and fragrances. My creativity is constantly stimulated.

“The entire art world is a fundamental source of inspiration in the creative process – pictorial art, photography, cinema and fashion. For me everything has its own importance”



Mnemosine: Often Haze will create different versions of a piece. Colour can completely change the mood and perception of an image, especially when you take it from colour to black and white



All images © Emi Haze


25th Photoshop Anniversary - Cosmogony Reloaded: In this piece for the 25th Anniversary of Adobe Photoshop, Haze gives his representation of the origin of the universe. A girl materialises from the sky, through a heap of clouds in a colourful explosion



Oceania: In many pieces you can feel a sense of movement. To achieve this Haze chose the right pose of the subject, on which he then used graphic elements such as curves to emphasise this dynamic effect

Intimacy 2: Many of Haze's works bring forth a vision of an unbodied spiritual world that lies between reality and daydreams in a digital Eden of discovery. His use of colour furthers this thought





“The result is the vision
of my imaginative world
hanging between reality and
fantasy – dream and utopia – in
which colour and sensitivity play
the predominant role”

WHAT ARE THE STEPS YOU TAKE WHEN WORKING ON A PROJECT?

My artwork starts from a photo and the first phase is retouching. Afterwards, I digitally import various hand-made elements such as scratches, ink marks, and acrylic [or] watercolour stains. All the blending modes, layer masks and adjustment layers I use make the starting image seem less digital and more similar to a painting or drawing.

This phase of manual elaboration is then merged with the strictly digital one. Selecting parts of different photo images (like trees, plants, leaves, clouds, etc.), I try to blend them with a double exposure technique – combining the human form with nature and its four elements: fire, air, water and earth.

Many Photoshop tools are capital in my designs. I often use blending modes – Multiply, Overlay, Soft Light – to obtain peculiar effects with the combination of different layers and textures to achieve the double exposure. Adjustment layers are another essential tool. Colour is an element of primary importance for the final perception of the artwork. At all times I have complete control of the colour throughout every phase of my creation.

HOW HAS YOUR WORK DEVELOPED OVER THE YEARS? AND ARE THERE THINGS YOU WANT TO EXPERIMENT WITH IN THE FUTURE?

In my early work, I focused on graphic style based construction and deconstruction of the human body using various tools and graphic effects that rend it almost as a sketch.

In my more recent work, I try to merge the human body with nature or rather with the four elements. The result is the vision of my imaginative world hanging between reality and fantasy – dream and utopia – in which colour and sensitivity play the predominant role.

I have several ideas to test in the future. I'd like to work on different subjects for example. My style is in constant evolution.

HAVE YOU HAD ANY CHALLENGES THAT YOU HAD TO OVERCOME AND DO YOU HAVE ANY ADVICE FOR ARTISTS WHO ARE FACING SIMILAR PROBLEMS?

My school was fundamental for my education and learning the programs necessary for the development of my work. But it is the constancy and above all the passion that I have for this job that allowed me to achieve excellent results. The advice I would give is to have patience, but be persistent. Have an open mind and try to always find inspiration for your creativity.

HOW DID THE PROJECT FOR PHOTOSHOP'S 25TH ANNIVERSARY COME ABOUT? WHAT DID IT MEAN FOR YOU AS AN ARTIST?

I was approached by the agency Goodby, Silverstein & Partners of San Francisco to be part of the Photoshop 25th Anniversary, a special advertising campaign



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commissioned by Adobe! They licensed two of my pieces and one of them, *Cosmogony Reloaded*, appears in the Adobe *Dream On* spot, which was featured during the 2015 Academy Awards ceremony. It was also used in other media as part of a bigger international campaign. Today it has been viewed over 2 million times on YouTube and recently won three prizes in Cannes. It was nominated for best Commercial Film in this year's Emmy Awards!

Taking part in this was a huge honour and brought me personal satisfaction. I am proud to see my work in promotional content created for Adobe.

Cosmogony Reloaded was also used on **Adobe.com** to present the new features of the Adobe Creative Cloud 2015.

WHAT WAS IT LIKE DESIGNING A COVER FOR LAUREN OLIVER'S BOOK *VANISHING GIRLS*?

Working on this project brought great gratification. Planning and designing the cover of a book is always a big challenge and responsibility, because with one image you must represent the content and soul of a book. At the same time it must be intriguing and attractive in order to catch attention those who usually read other genres.

WHERE DO YOU SHOWCASE YOUR WORK? AND HOW DO YOU ATTRACT VIEWERS?

I have a personal website where I showcase my portfolio in the best way. For many potential clients an artist's website is still the best way to judge his or her work. I use every social network, especially Facebook and Twitter to promote my artwork. There I

“Pristine image quality is a must. Make sure that all your images are crisp and are shown in an appropriate size when you post them on Behance”

update my fans and followers about all the news, publications and much more. But the most important network for me is Behance. I believe it is a very useful platform and has a huge community.

Every time you publish a project, you're not just showcasing your work, you're showing the world a little bit of yourself as a designer and your presentation reflects this. So give it personality!

Pristine image quality is a must. Make sure that all your images are crisp and at shown in an appropriate size when you post them on Behance. Posting detailed shots is always a good idea. Include the 'making of', style frames, explorations, rejected versions, colour versions, and close-ups – your work isn't just the final image you created.

WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD?

Two of my pieces *Cosmogony: Origin of the Universe* and *Mnemosine* will be featured in a new advertising campaign for Wacom [that began in September]. I am currently working for several clients on other projects as well. A few weeks ago, I was contacted by Penguin Random House of New York to create the cover jacket of a new young adult novel. The project is still secret, so I cannot say more. I am also working on the cover jacket of the Italian edition of the book *Panic* by Lauren Oliver (also known as *Vanishing Girl*), which will be

published by Safarà Editore for the first time in Italy. The success of this novel has been so huge in the United States that Universal Pictures has already purchased the movie rights.

Finally, I am working on the cover art for album for an American singer.

HAZE'S PORTFOLIO TIPS TOP ADVICE FOR BEING A SUCCESS

■ BE ORIGINAL

Innovate and create something that has never been seen before. Something original! Be the exception! Create your own unique style that best represents yourself, so that you can be identified.

■ SHOW OFF YOUR BEST

Present your top work in the best possible way. It doesn't matter if it is all personal projects. If it is great, be proud of it! Every time you publish a project you are not just showcasing your work, you're presenting the world that you are a designer.

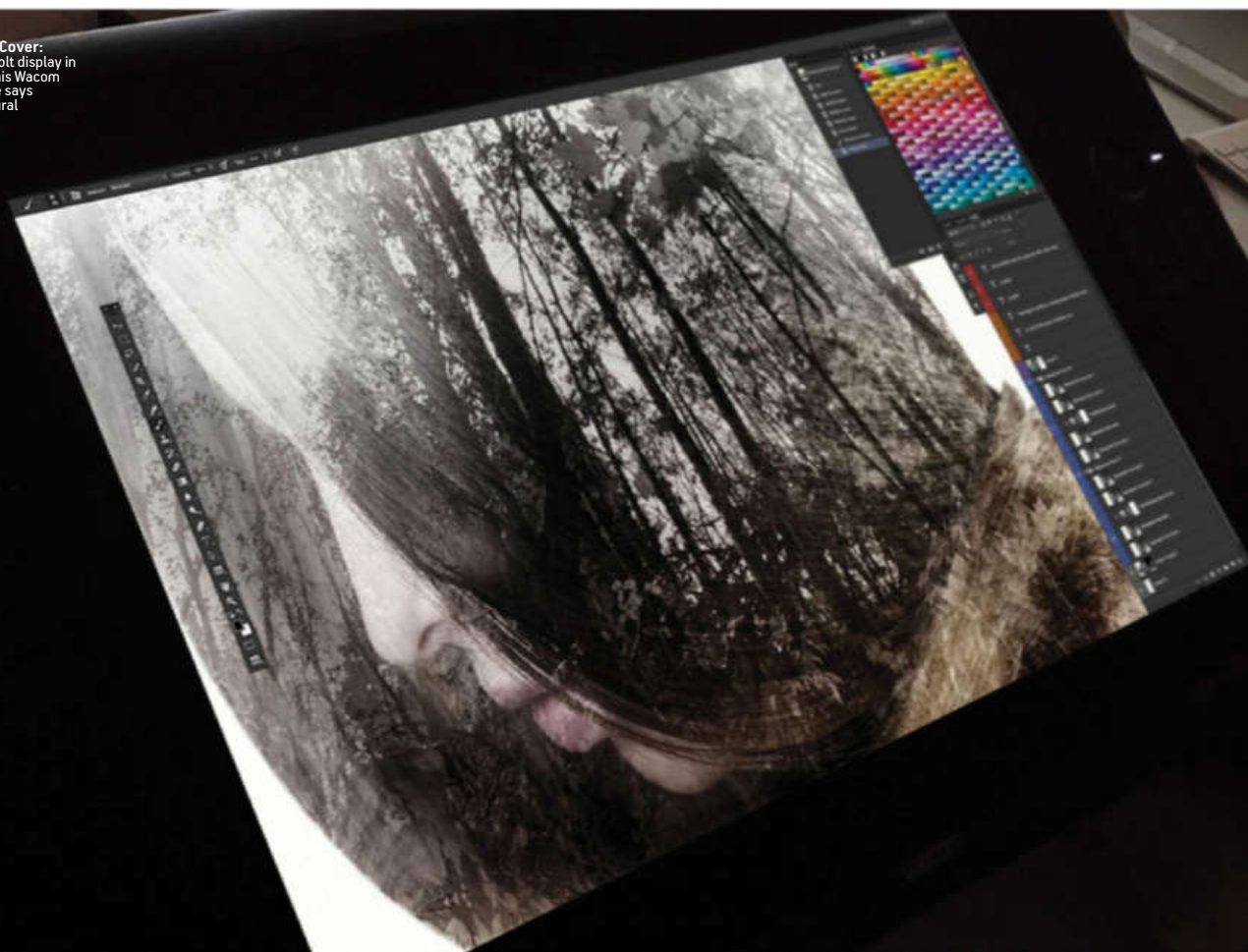
■ USE NATURAL TEXTURES

Explore nature to find the most beautiful and interesting textures. On the ground, tree bark, leaves, etc. Nature offers many great and unique textures that spark ideas for your designs. Photograph and scan things! Or emulate them in your own drawings... The possibilities are endless for interesting and rich results.

■ CREATE HAND-MADE TEXTURES

I have a big collection of different brush strokes, ink marks, sprays, acrylic paints, washes of watercolour created by hand on textured paper, which I have built up over time. I scanned them at a high dpi, and they are ready to be used during my digital process.

Lauren Oliver's *Vanishing Girls* Cover:
Haze uses an iMac with a Thunderbolt display in his studio, but his favourite tool is his Wacom Cintiq! It is his digital canvas and he says drawing on the display is more natural





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DAY IN, DAY OUT

MIKE WINKELMANN SPENDS TWO HOURS EVERY SINGLE DAY CREATING A NEW IMAGE AND POSTING IT ONLINE AND IT'S MADE HIM THE ARTIST HE IS TODAY

ABOUT THE ARTIST

MIKE WINKELMANN
www.beeple-crap.com
@beeple



Mike Winkelmann is a 34-year-old graphic designer living in Neenah, WI. He works as a freelance motion designer, primarily working with clients to create concert visuals. Before venturing out as a freelance artist he worked as a web designer. Aside from commissioned work he is also interested in creating short films, VJ clips, and his *Everyday* project has kept him busy for over eight years.

NAME OF PROJECT EVERYDAY

Since 2007 digital artist Mike Winkelmann has found time to create a brand new piece of work every single day, and the series has quickly developed a band of admirers and loyal followers.

He's dedicated whole years to different programs and while this year is Cinema 4D, Photoshop still comes into play "for just about every image."

Winkelmann explains: "Every image minimally needs some Curves on it to make sure the grade is exactly how you'd like it.

"Most of what I do is pretty simple though in terms of just overlaying things that would be very time consuming to render in Cinema 4D or wouldn't really make sense. Usually this means any sort of particles or environment effects.

"As for colour correction, I really like the Google Nik collection filters as well as Magic Bullet Looks. Beyond that I will occasionally do some compositing in skies or other elements.

"There really is no set workflow though as I'm definitely just making this up as I go each day."

WHERE DID THE IDEA FOR THE EVERYDAY SERIES COME FROM?

I got the idea from Tom Judd, who did a sketch everyday to get better. I thought this was a really interesting idea and a great way to get better at drawing. So I started in 2007 drawing once a day and posting it online.

HOW LONG DID YOU PLAN ON DOING IT?

I planned on just doing it for that first year, but after that I realised I could use this project to learn other things. So I started doing a render a day from Cinema 4D, which I didn't know at all. I [have] just passed my 3000th consecutive Everyday...

HOW ON EARTH DO YOU FIND THE INSPIRATION, TIME AND MOTIVATION TO DO IT EVERY DAY?

There is no secret. It has to just be a priority for you. It has to be as essential as eating to you. You also have to cut out some things in your life. There is *nobody* who just has two hours a day where they are literally doing absolutely nothing, so everyone has to make time. Sometimes there are some easy mindless things to cut out, but most of the time this is going to mean making real sacrifices to make it work. I would say one other thing that helps is to surround yourself with people who are supportive. My family has also been absolutely amazing. They know how important it is to me and they are very accommodating to help me. It really would not happen without them.

WHEN DID YOU START TO GET AN AUDIENCE FOR IT?

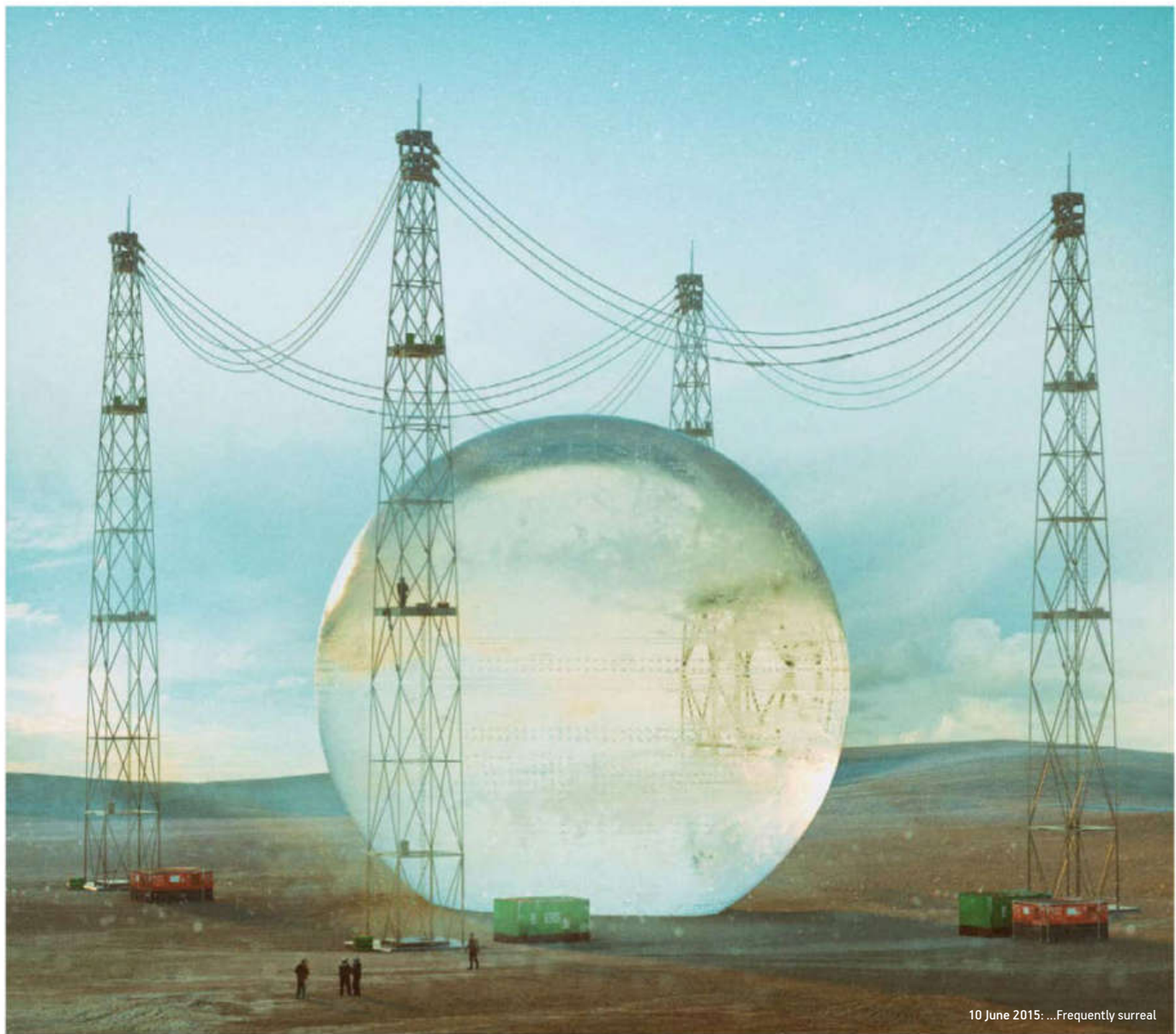
Well there has sort of been an audience slowly growing from beginning. In the beginning though, I mean it was before any sort of social networks were too popular, so there were really very few people watching along. That's actually a really good thing though because the work you put out is probably [going to] be absolutely trash and you need to just get better at putting stuff out and not feeling self-conscious. The point of the project is not to get attention, it's to get better.

WHAT DID YOU DO IN PHOTOSHOP FOR THE EVERYDAY ON 11 AUGUST 2015 ?

After rendering out the main building image in Cinema 4D with an alpha channel, I layered in



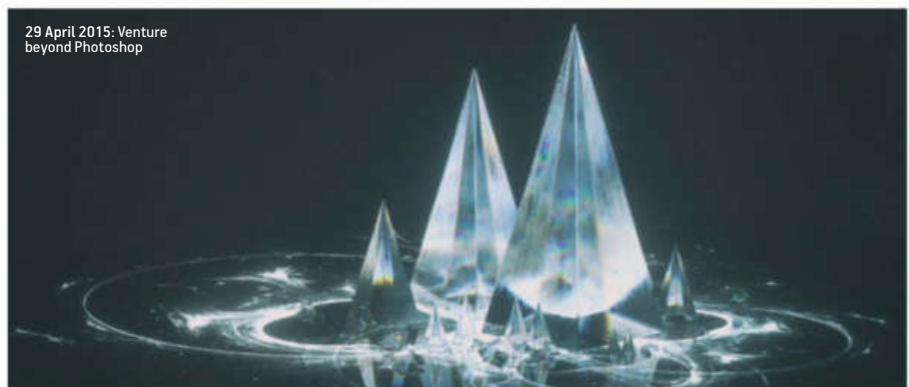
All images © Mike Winkelmann



10 June 2015: ...Frequently surreal



15 June 2015: Composite in skies



29 April 2015: Venture beyond Photoshop

the clouds around the building using the building as a mask. I filled in a little more atmosphere using a paint brush with a cloud texture to give things a bit more of a hazy feel. [Next] I filled the background with a slight blue gradient and overlayed a sky texture set to Screen to give it some depth. Then I took the Burn brush and worked along the edges of the building to give them a bit more [of] a weathered, old look. I also overlayed some plaster textures on the building to help give it a less uniform look. Then I made a

mask around the McDonald's sign and did a Hue/ Saturation bump to help it pop a bit more. I then applied Curves to take down the overall saturation and make the blacks a bit more pronounced as well as giving it a bit of an orangish tint. As a final touch I added a bit of grain and overlayed some lens dirt to make it feel a bit more organic.

HAVE YOU GOT MUCH WORK ON THE BACK OF THE SERIES?

I have gotten a lot more work from the VJ clips

that I have released, but there have been quite a few people that have reached out because of the Everyday's, which is really awesome and much appreciated.

HOW LONG DO YOU PLAN TO CARRY ON?

At least until [I have completed] ten years. After then I'll probably take a good look and make any modifications. It's hard to imagine quitting at this point though because it's been such a great tool for learning and it's so engrained in my day-to-day life.

SNASK

QUIRKY, CREATIVE AND QUITE APART FROM THE NORM, SNASK IS A CREATIVE AGENCY REWRITING THE RULES ON WHAT IS POSSIBLE IN DESIGN AND BRANDING

Snask stands out from the sea of studios producing computer-generated, wholly digital, imagery to wow clients. Instead, the Swedish creative agency like to work with their hands, crafting, creating and building unique works of art that are taken into the digital environment towards the end of the process. This means that no two projects are ever quite the same and the result is that the clients they work with get something completely unlike anything that their peers could produce – making Snask a very popular agency indeed.

In order to create such grand, quirky and off-the-cuff artwork, the founding members had a very clear vision of what they wanted their studio to be like, or more precisely, not be like. “Magnus [Berg, co-founder and creative director] and I started the idea of the agency during our first year at university together,” explains co-founder and creative director Fredrik [Freddie] Öst. “We thought most agencies seemed stiff and conservative, so we wanted to start something of our own and something that we could create without the influence of old men with too much power. We wanted Snask to be our vehicle of fun, combined with an extremely high delivery of design and creativity.”

This was back in 2007 when Öst and Berg were studying graphic design in the UK. It was the UK phrase ‘eye candy’ that inspired the name of the studio, as it was an expression not used much in the duo’s native Sweden. ‘Snask’ means ‘candy, filth and gossip’ in old Swedish slang, and particularly stands out in their homeland where the meaning is known and considered controversial for a respectable business setup. Still, this is one studio that would certainly not be bothered by controversy and it helps to isolate it from the more ‘conservative’ world it tries to set itself apart from.

Building up this dream studio has meant getting a strong creative team together that is able to deliver on those expectations and contribute the skills needed. “At Snask we trust everyone within their skillset. They are all superstars handpicked to be the best in their field,” concurs Berg. “Therefore everyone knows their own expectation and responsibility. But it doesn’t destroy our teamwork; rather the opposite. Everyone knows their own as well as their colleagues’ strengths and weaknesses, and that way we all know how to work together.”

The studio’s unique way of working has attracted clients from around the world, wanting to get a more



“We’re not a mediocre agency and we’ve never strived to be [anything less] than spectacular at what we do. And to be spectacular within design you need your own style and you need the ability to get it through to your projects and clients”



ABOUT THE STUDIO

SNASK

www.snask.com

@snasksthlm

Snask is the internationally renowned rockstar creative agency that creates the heart and soul of brands. They create new brands and rejuvenate old ones.



Magnus Berg
Founder and
Creative Director



Fredrik Öst
Founder and
Creative Director



All images © Snask

Work environment: This shot shows the layout of the work environment for Snask. The sofa in the back right of the image is where the new bar area has been set up



Hard at work: Proving it's not all play and no work, here designers Magdalena Czarnecki and Richard Gray work hard on a project



Studio bar: Combining work and play, this image shows the studio's very own bar, which offers a chance for the team to wind down in a stylish environment

“Photoshop is a tool that we use to retouch images and correct them before sending to print. But we don't like to fake things in Photoshop; we [prefer to] build it in reality and then photograph it”

tactile and less digital look for their brand. As such, Snask is able to put a lot of its own style and creativity into the commissions that it has taken on. “Most definitely,” agrees Öst. “Why? Because we're not a mediocre agency and we've never strived to be [anything less] than spectacular at what we do. And to be spectacular within design you need your own style and you need the ability to get it through to your projects and clients.”

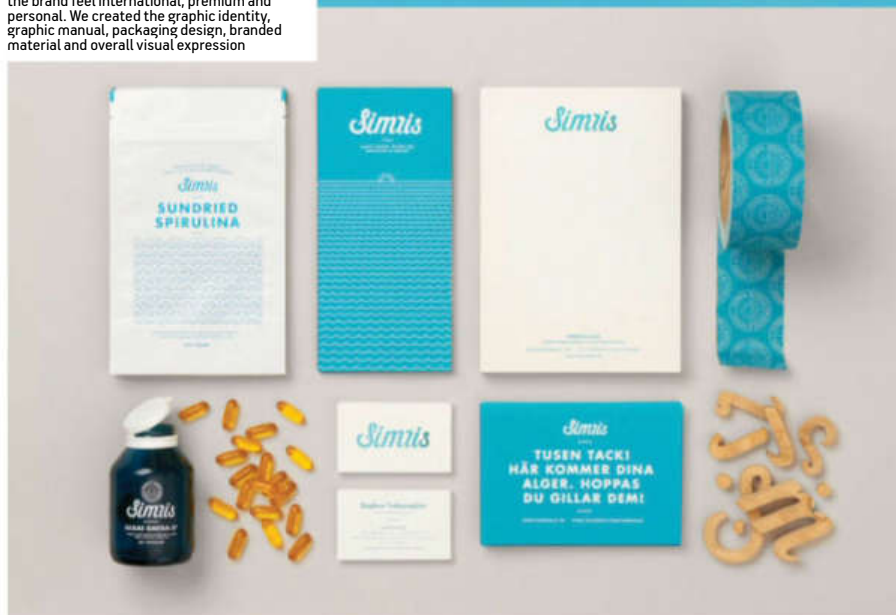
One example of this is a cover image and corresponding editorial artwork that was created for *Washington Post*, the hugely successful US-based magazine. The design was entirely pieced together by hand. The final build measured in at five feet by three feet and took between 100–200 hours. You can see more about how this was created in the Project Breakdown boxout.

This project certainly sounds challenging enough, but it doesn't weigh in as the studio's biggest build to date. That honour goes, quite literally, to its creation of artwork for the Malmö Festival 2014. The team crated the design in 3D, measuring 15 x 8 metres. It was so big that it had to be photographed from 30 metres up in the sky. “It was very difficult to do the kerning since I had to be up in the skylift and our designer Jens had to run around and tackle the letters in order to move them,” explains Öst. “Another challenge was to get the shadow to fall perfectly from upper left to lower right. The solution to that was to start at 6am so that at noon we would have two hours to do the shoot before the shadows would fall incorrectly.” The photography needed to be right before it could be retouched and sent to print as a poster for the event. The build was used as a physical installation at the festival a few months later, so that attendees could walk in and interact with it.

Snask's workflow relies heavily on traditional methods, as Öst says: “Back in the day they used



Simris Alg: Simris Alg (aka Simris) is a Swedish pioneering agribusiness. The goal was to make the brand feel international, premium and personal. We created the graphic identity, graphic manual, packaging design, branded material and overall visual expression





■ WASHINGTON POST

THE TEAM LEAD US THROUGH THE CREATION OF THIS COVER IMAGE, WHICH WAS PAINSTAKINGLY CREATED BY HAND, PHOTOGRAPHED AND RETOUCHE



01 THE CONCEPT

Washington Post is one of the biggest newspapers in the US. When it started planning for its readers *Favorite's* issue, [the magazine team] wanted something fun and tactile. After reviewing more than 40 agencies, they ended up calling us at Snask. We decided to make the cover and the editorial images entirely by hand.



02 LAYING IT OUT

After sketching the design by hand, it's taken into Illustrator to do a rough sketch in vectors. This is then printed out again to prepare to build it up for real. After having all the letters done, it's time to lay them out on the grid ready to start building the scene. The team are building the installation on-site in the photographic studio using 3D handmade models and invisible wire.



03 POSITION EVERYTHING

Now it's time to position every letter perfectly with the right angle so that shadows fall in a pleasant way to give contrast. We wanted to capture the essence of every category (eating, drinking, music and arts, for example) in the design and illustration of each letter of the word 'Favorites'.



04 MATERIALS AND PAINT

We wanted to create fun, unique and physical icons that would reflect the characteristics of each topic, all in different materials. The materials used were everything from plywood and concrete, to clay and real neon light. This image shows a hard step, painting, where [there is] only one chance to get it right.



05 FINAL TOUCHES

Finally, the [finishing] touches are given. Here a plastic fork is pushed into the clay sausage. After this the image is done by hand, it is ready to just be retouched in Photoshop and delivered [to the client].

their hands to create typography, posters, etc. Then came the computer. What we're doing is taking design out of the computer again." However, it is impossible to skip the digital completely and Photoshop plays an important role in the creation of the majority of its projects. A typical project will start with a hand-drawn sketch. This is then taken into Illustrator to build an accurate representation of the concept, which is printed out and re-created by hand. The build is photographed and imported into Photoshop for colour correction and retouching, ensuring everything is perfect before it goes to print. "Photoshop is a tool that we use to retouch images and correct them before sending to print," confirms Berg. "Almost every project needs to get colour corrected, etc. But we don't like to fake things in Photoshop; we [prefer to] build it in reality and then photograph it."

Not content with working on large-scale projects for international clients, Snask is an agency that has its fingers in many different pies. It has created a book called *Make Enemies and Gain Fans* (available from Amazon), which shares its wisdom and ethos with aspiring creatives looking for the inspiration and the motivation to try something new. Due to its popularity, a second edition of the book is soon to be released. Giving advice is second nature, as the team also give lectures and talks around the world, looking at creative entrepreneurship and sharing some of their personal insights and story behind the studio.

“It's very rare that Photoshop does not make an appearance during the production of work for clients”



The studio: The Snask studio, overlooking the podium, reflects the quirky and unique nature of the studio's output while providing a creative, practical place to work in

Berg gets very enthusiastic when asked what makes Snask stand out from the other creative agencies around, replying that it is a combination of the different things that they do and the way that they run their studio and team: "We have our own creative festival called Yay Festival. We have our own track and field event called Snask & Field. We're working on starting up our own brewery. I guess everyone who works here loves it. We are one of very few agencies that have a collective agreement. Every employee gets 30 days of paid holiday, not counting Christmas, New Year and other national holidays. Every year we go somewhere with everyone to have fun together. This year we went to Barcelona and will also do a second trip to New York for a week."

The passion and enthusiasm of the team is exciting, just like the work that Snask creates and the studio certainly has no plans of slowing down in the near future.

In typical fashion, Öst takes a light-hearted view of future plans: "We don't want to become too many people, even though we strive for world domination. We only want superstars in our team and that's what we have at the moment."

"Right now we do a lot of work in the US, but we're also rebranding a whole paradise island at a secret location. So perhaps we will do much more international work in the future, and hopefully in places where we get to wear as few clothes as possible, but with sunglasses."

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF FREDRIK ÖST

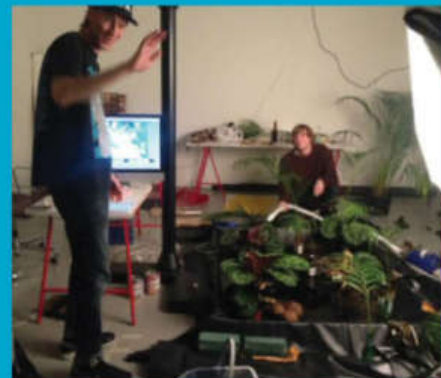
THE FOUNDER AND CREATIVE DIRECTOR TALKS US THROUGH A HECTIC DAY IN THE LIFE OF SNASK



08:30 | ON THE TRAIN
Since most of us live in the same area you meet colleagues in the subway. Here's me, Magnus and Magdalena randomly bumping into one another!



11:00 | MEET WITH CLIENTS
Meeting with our investment bank client and their other Scandinavian offices. Not sure why we're on two monitors, however.



14:00 | WORK IN THE STUDIO
In the studio finding our designers Jens Nilsson and Richard Gray working on an identity project.



Malmö Festival 2014: The build that was created for the Malmö Festival 2014 photoshoot and poster, was also installed at the festival three months later for people to interact with

TOP 5 PRODUCTION TIPS

■ MAKE SURE YOU'RE NOT ONLY PRODUCING

At Snask, the one who creates tends to be the best at producing his/her own creation. So don't get stuck under some creative director who takes all the credit for your work.

■ USE YOUR HANDS!

Yes, you were born with them. Use them for more than just swiping faces on Tinder. Build your design in reality. It is much more inspiring and fun!

■ BE SOCIAL

So many graphic designers we meet are socially awkward. Everyone's got some kind of social skill so start using them, otherwise you'll focus too much on not to [screw] up in social situations.

■ GET THAT STICK OUT OF YOUR BUM

You are a creative, that's enough. Stop talking about kerning and bragging about grids that you made. Go into the toilet, sit down, shut off the light and become yourself. Now go out and keep being that person instead.

■ NO, YOU'RE NOT AN ARCHITECT

Many art directors believe that they're architects. With black turtlenecks and horn-rimmed glasses, they tell students how it took them so much effort to get where they are and they should count themselves lucky if they ever get to become an art director.



Malmö Festival 2014: This was a large-scale project that was created by hand and photographed, then put together into this final poster for the Malmö Festival 2014 event



16:00 | **PERSONAL PROJECTS**
Dressing up and starring as an evil Chinese emperor in a self-initiated film project.



20:00 | **TIME FOR FOOTBALL**
Snask take Silver in the annual football cup for agencies in Stockholm!



01:00 | **AFTER HOURS**
Me and Erik DJ-ing in Sweden's best rock club, Debaser.

All images: © The Team 2014

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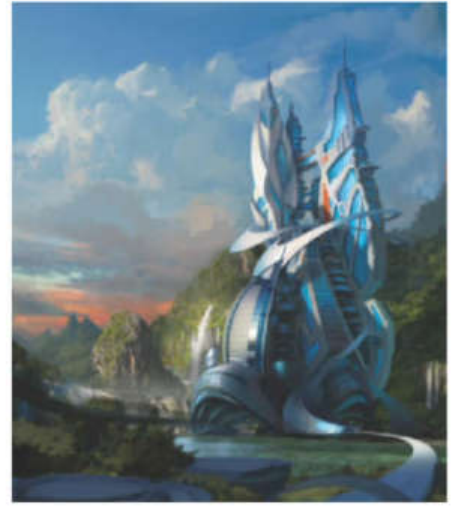
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PAINT LIKE A PRO

LEARN THE PHOTOSHOP SKILLS YOU NEED FOR PROFESSIONAL DIGITAL PAINTING IN PHOTOSHOP, INCLUDING STRONG LINE DRAWING, PAINTING RICH VALUE AND COLOUR, AND TEXTURING EFFECTIVELY WITH PHOTOGRAPHS

Digital painting is not just a matter of picking up a stylus and waiting for inspiration to hit – you need as good a grasp on the essential Photoshop tools you'll be using as you do when designing typography, modelling in 3D or compositing photomanipulations.

In the following guide, you will become skilled in painting and texturing from start to finish in Photoshop. For the beginning of the tutorial you will be drawing line art and painting colour overlays with varying brush opacity, so a pen tablet is required. A mouse will suffice later on in the photo texturing and manipulation phase. Before diving into Photoshop's intuitive interface, gather references and consider a membership to a texture site. **Mayang.com**, **freetextures**.

3dtotal.com, and **cgtextures.com** are all great resources. Keeping the theme of a futuristic sci-fi city in mind, gather a wide variety of photos and resources for this project. Glass for the buildings, vegetation and mountains for our landscape, and skies are the bulk of the photos we will be using. For reference, research modern architecture, particularly Dubai and the Burj Al Arab. Also research prominent sci-fi artists, notably Syd Mead. His work exemplifies the grandeur in architecture we are looking for.

For an effective piece, it's also really important to understand perspective, scale, and atmospheric perspective. If you are a bit rusty, simply web search 'design elements and principles' or 'perspective basics' to brush up on your knowledge, so that you can start this tutorial with confidence.



OUR EXPERT

ADAM VARGA
www.vargaa.com
[@avarga89](https://twitter.com/avarga89)

Adam Varga specialises in environment concept art and matte painting. He believes combining your knowledge of traditional art fundamentals and emerging digital platforms is the key to successful digital art.

SOURCE FILES

Head to www.filesilo.co.uk/advancedphotoshop to get a template for drawing thumbnails, links to the custom brushes used, and a real-time video of the line drawing process.



DEFAULT PHOTOSHOP BRUSHES

SIX ESSENTIAL PHOTOSHOP BRUSHES FOR CREATING LINE ART, ADDING VALUE, AND DETAILING YOUR SCENE



HARD MECHANICAL

The first and most essential brush on the list is the Hard Mechanical brush, which is excellent for hard lines of varying width and opacity. This brush can be used to sketch in your scene outlines or for drawing your signature when your piece is complete.



SOFT MECHANICAL

Just like the first brush, except with Hardness set to 0%. The Soft Mechanical Brush can be used to paint in values and provide soft, gradient-like tones, which include skies, atmosphere, or haze.



DRY BRUSH (60PX)

This brush gives a foggy effect much like the basic Soft Mechanical, but with greater texture and grain. Paint in Overlay or Hard Light mode to get a vintage, streaky look.



ROUND BRISTLE

The Round Bristle comes close to mimicking a dry acrylic brush, and is great for painting in rough colours to prime your piece. Use it set with a medium Minimum Transfer and Diameter for effective blending.



WET MEDIA BRUSHES

The Rough Ink brush has jagged edges with a dual brush texture, making it great for painting rough ground or foliage. Turn off Shape Dynamics, but keep Transfer on for a more textured look.



PENCIL-THICK OR THIN

This brush is similar to the Hard Mechanical, but has much more width variance, which is great for depicting uneven lines such as cracks in the wall. Paint in Color Dodge mode for a cool lightning effect.



PHOTOSHOP'S BRUSHES AND HOW TO USE THEM

USE YOUR PEN TABLET IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE BRUSH PANEL FOR AN EFFECTIVE WORKFLOW

Photoshop has a large array of customisable default brushes and also allows you to import brushes you've downloaded and create your own from scratch. This provides infinite painting and rendering possibilities so you can finish a piece in any artistic style. Brushes can mimic chalk or oil paint for rough overlays or clouds and mist for an atmospheric effect. Several tools, such as perspective guides and grids, also come in brush form.

Before exploring Photoshop brushes and their settings, make sure you have a compatible pen tablet installed and configured to your version of Photoshop. You will have to add Photoshop to the application list in Settings for any pen pressure controls to work. Once installed, create a new file in Photoshop, go to Window>Brush Presets and a new window will open up with a Brush & Brush Preset tab. At the top right corner of the brush preset tab is a tiny list icon, which opens more options. Clicking this reveals all the brush families of Photoshop and allows you to load recently installed brushes, adjust the icon display size and type, and save a new brush preset. For the

following examples, choose Natural Brushes, and select Charcoal 59 Pixels. Remember, if you are unfamiliar with the brush titles, simply click the right icon to expand options and select Text Only for your icon type.

Now click the Brush tab and then Brush Tip Shape. In this panel are your basic adjustments, which are fairly self-explanatory. Size, Angle, and Roundness can be controlled numerically or by adjusting the slider, pivot points, or arrow on the sample circle. Hardness controls the edge softness, but note that on some brushes Hardness is disabled. Spacing controls the distance between each painted stroke. If you find your brushes lagging, your Spacing may be too low! About 10-20 percent is a good amount.

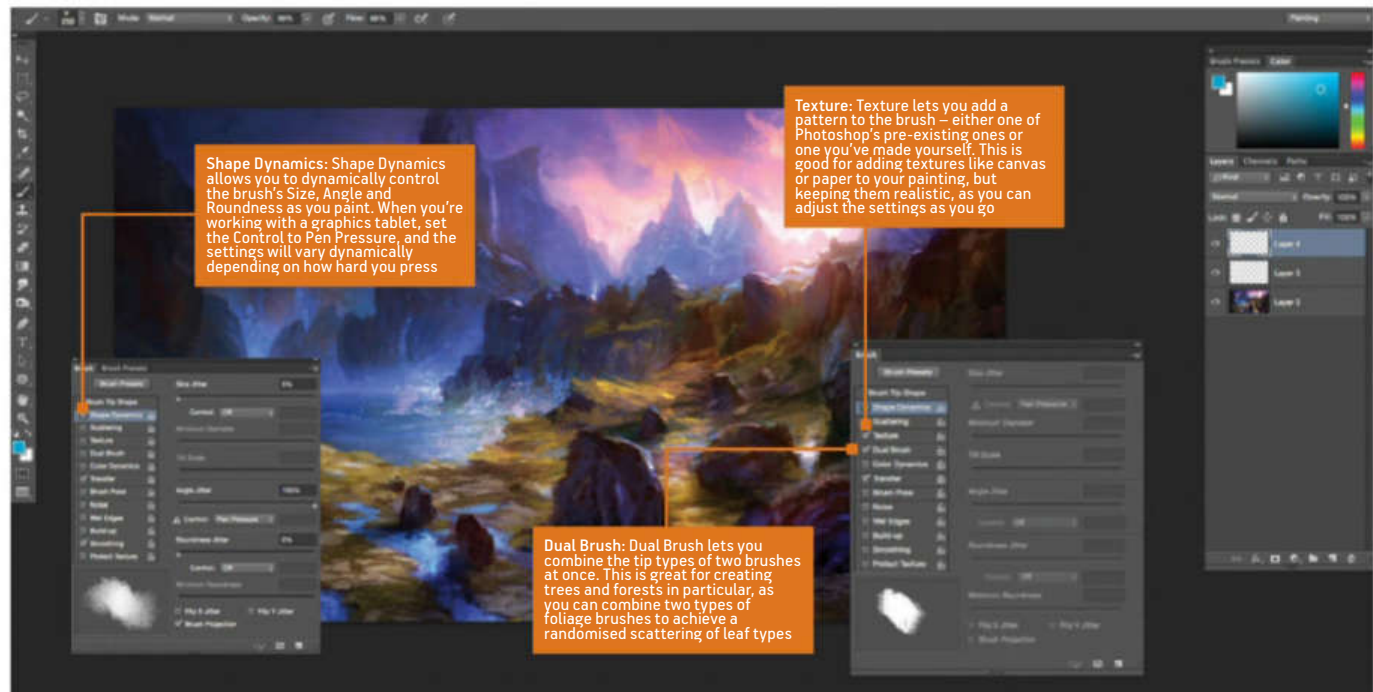
Next is the Shape Dynamics panel, where you can adjust pressure sensitive settings for Size, Angle, and Roundness. Brush Projection, when checked, detects your pen's tilt and rotation. Note that this feature is already detected in some brushes and may be disabled. Setting the Control Dynamics button to Pen Pressure is the most effective for digital painting. The

Diameter adjustment draws the brush from 0% to 100% Opacity in relation to your pressure. Tweaking the Jitter settings randomises the brush's output.

Scattering is excellent for duplicating your brush in one easy stroke. Adjusting the Scatter Amount and

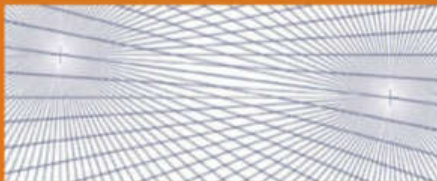
Count is very useful when drawing natural elements such as rain, flowers, or birds. Textures, such as canvas or rock, can easily be applied to your brush in the Textures panel. Raising the scale while lowering the brightness, contrast, and

depth is a useful tool when painting in texture mode. Colour Dynamics are very useful for brush gradients in Fade Control and to randomise colours in Pen Pressure Control, which can help in drawing multi-coloured leaves or clouds.



ADAM VARGA'S FAVOURITE ONLINE BRUSHES

SIX BRUSHES FROM TALENTED ARTISTS THAT WILL HELP DETAIL AND IMPROVE YOUR PAINTINGS



TYLER MAY – VANISHING POINT

Link: <http://bit.ly/1QnxFI>

Price: Free

This brush is a huge timesaver and an essential one for setting perspective guides. Draw once on a guide for one-point perspective, or twice at equal distance for two-point perspective.



TYLER MAY – ROCK BIG

Link: <http://bit.ly/1QnxFI>

Price: Free

As the name implies, this brush helps for any rock or mountainous painting, but can also add texture to your ground. Colour Fill (G) a dark rock-shaped object, Cmd/Ctrl-select the shape, and paint over with this brush in Hard Light mode.



TYLER MAY – WATER 2 OR 3

Link: <http://bit.ly/1QnxFI>

Price: Free

Either water brush produces ripple and wave effects effortlessly. Use this brush when painting distant water and switch to Color Dodge or Overlay blend mode for a bright sun reflection.



JONAS DE RO – INK BIG

Link: <http://bit.ly/1FjJC14>

Price: Free

The Big Ink brush mimics an ink blot on canvas paper, giving the painting a more traditional feel. Paint with very light pressure and Shape Dynamics off to depict stylised clouds and skies.

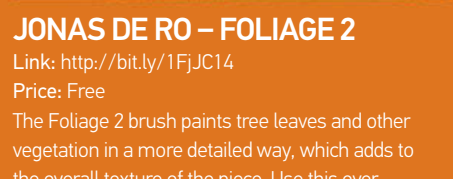


JONAS DE RO – WEIRD PAINT 1

Link: <http://bit.ly/1FjJC14>

Price: Free

This brush is excellent for depicting stylised, but blocky rough patterns, such as bark on a tree, or rock surfaces. Use it with more Spacing and a low Minimum Diameter.



JONAS DE RO – FOLIAGE 2

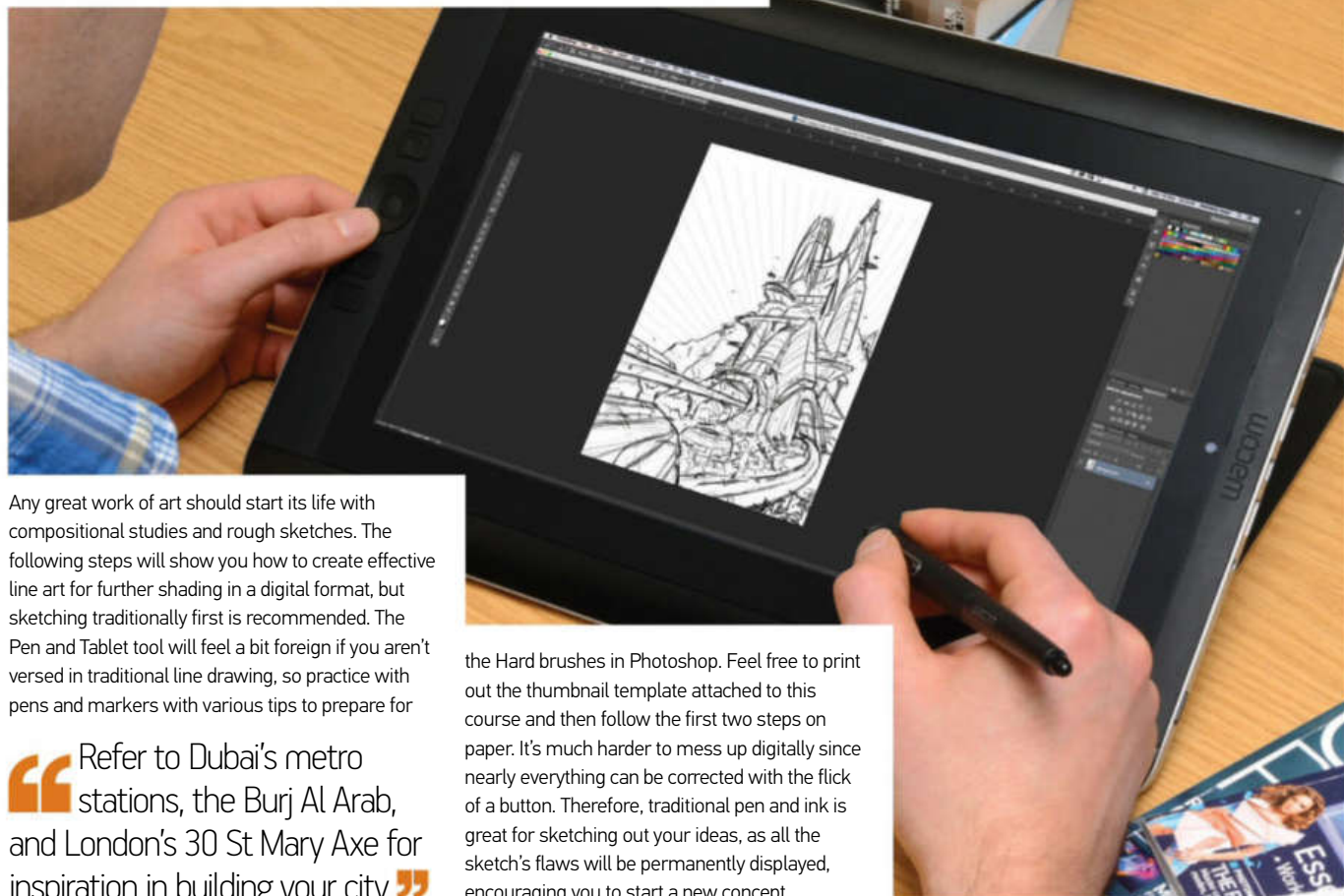
Link: <http://bit.ly/1FjJC14>

Price: Free

The Foliage 2 brush paints tree leaves and other vegetation in a more detailed way, which adds to the overall texture of the piece. Use this over landscape images to paint in trees.

SET UP AND SKETCH

SET THE VANISHING POINT AND DRAW THE LINE ART, CAREFULLY FOLLOWING THE PERSPECTIVE GUIDES



Any great work of art should start its life with compositional studies and rough sketches. The following steps will show you how to create effective line art for further shading in a digital format, but sketching traditionally first is recommended. The Pen and Tablet tool will feel a bit foreign if you aren't versed in traditional line drawing, so practice with pens and markers with various tips to prepare for

Refer to Dubai's metro stations, the Burj Al Arab, and London's 30 St Mary Axe for inspiration in building your city

the Hard brushes in Photoshop. Feel free to print out the thumbnail template attached to this course and then follow the first two steps on paper. It's much harder to mess up digitally since nearly everything can be corrected with the flick of a button. Therefore, traditional pen and ink is great for sketching out your ideas, as all the sketch's flaws will be permanently displayed, encouraging you to start a new concept.



01 CREATE THUMBNAIL BOXES

If you cannot download the thumbnail template, create a new U.S. Paper document and select the Rectangle tool (U). Select Shape on the top bar instead of Path, and change Fill to None, Stroke to black at 3pt, and a size of 700x904px. Choose the Move tool (V) and Alt/Option+drag to duplicate the shape eight more times across the canvas.



02 DRAW THUMBNAIL SKETCHES

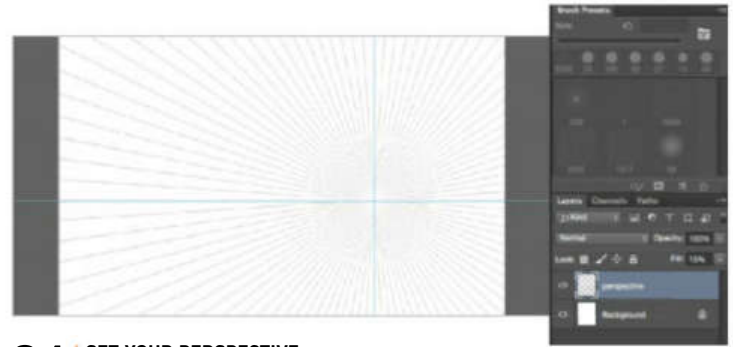
It's always a good habit to draw rough ideas before diving into a piece. Now that the thumbnail boxes are set up, begin sketching your cityscape, keeping the rule of thirds in mind. To help with this, you can view your Ruler (Cmd/Ctrl +R) and select the Move tool (V) to drag

guidelines over your boxes. Now choose a 25px Hard Mechanical brush with Transfer and Diameter set to about 10%. At this point you are only determining the general shape of your structures and their placement, so keep your lines loose and avoid details.



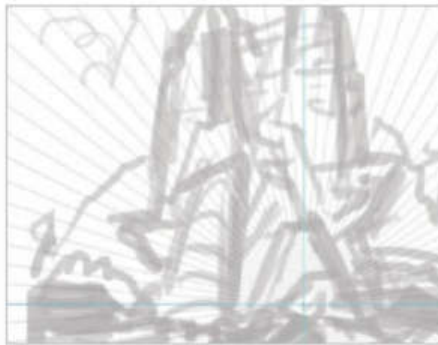
03 CREATE YOUR DOCUMENT

After choosing your thumbnail, create a new document with a white background at 2835px width, 3661px height, and 300ppi. Go to the Units & Rulers panel in Preferences and change Ruler Units to Pixels. Now make sure rulers are enabled and click the left side and drag out a guide to about 2000px. Click the top and drag down a guide to about 2700px; this serves as your horizon line. The intersection of these guides is where your focal point lies.



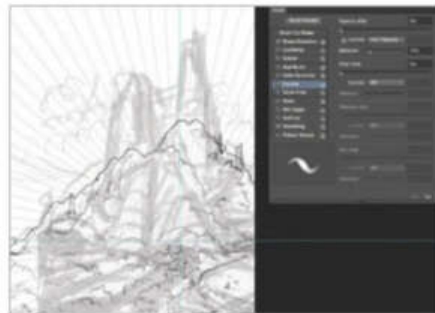
04 SET YOUR PERSPECTIVE

Immediately create a new layer and title it 'Perspective'. There are two ways to set your perspective. Select the Polygon tool (hit Shift+U three times), hit the gear icon on the top toolbar, tick Star, set Indent Sides to 99% and set Sides to 100. Or, select the recommended Perspective brush at 5000px. With either method, ensure the centre of the perspective shape is placed where the guides intersect. Change the layer Fill to about 15% so it doesn't distract from your line drawing.



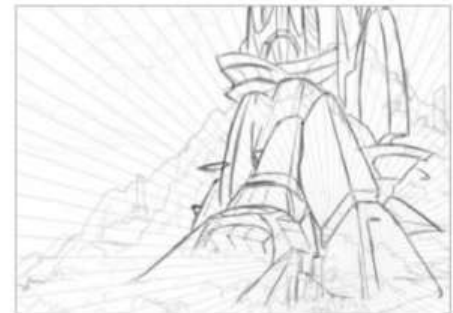
05 IMPORT THUMBNAIL

Now Rectangle Marquee your thumbnail and copy and paste it to your newly created document, adjusting the size (Cmd/Ctrl+T) to fit the canvas. Remember to place the image in the guide crosshairs so the horizon line appears correct and you have a great focal point. Rename this layer 'thumbnail' and lower the Fill to about 20%. Create a new layer titled 'line art' and choose a 15px Hard Mechanical brush with Minimum Diameter set to 15% and Transfer set to 15%.



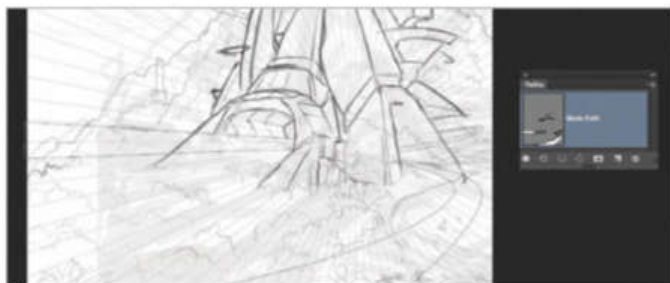
06 DRAW BACK AND MID-GROUND

We will be drawing over the rough thumbnail, so grab that pen and begin fleshing out your background first: mountains, cliffs, and smaller structures in the distance. Look at photos of Hong Kong for inspiration, where tall structures emerge from the trees and steep mountainsides. At this point in the line drawing, don't worry about the main buildings just yet. That's what the Eraser tool is for. Scribble bumpy edges to resemble tree tops, a curved line for your beach, and some round lines to represent clouds.



07 BUILD THE CITY

Refer to Dubai's metro stations, the Burj Al Arab, and London's 30 St Mary Axe (aka the Gherkin) for inspiration in building your city. We will be depicting a futuristic city built of fibreglass, steel, and glass, so draw more fluid and round shapes, instead of straight, rigid lines. Use a 20px Hard Mechanical brush this time and draw the edges of your buildings, starting at the contour lines, and working your way in towards the centre. For help with this step, refer to the resources file: Step 7 Video, which shows a draw over of an initial concept.



08 CREATE A FOREGROUND

Our city will be an enclosed community, accessible only by certain transportation. With this in mind, draw a train terminal in the foreground. The tracks will encompass the city and lead the viewers eye towards the focal point. Use the Pen tool (P) for outlining of train tracks or curved building edges. Simply click a point to add your first anchor, then click and hold your next point, dragging in the direction you want your curve. Hold the Alt/Option button and click your most recent anchor point to remove the handle, and continue completing your shape.



09 REFINE THE DETAILS

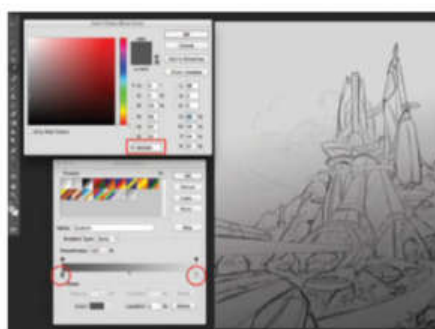
Create a new layer and title it 'Path Lines'. Now, choose a 3px Hard Mechanical brush, return to the Pen tool, Right-click and select Stroke Path. Choose Brush from the dropdown menu and deselect Simulate Pressure. Hit OK, and you now have outlines on all your paths. This will come in handy for fine hard edges in our texturing phase. Now, continue adding details, erase unseen portions of the background, and experiment! Even after your thumbnail phase feel free to erase and redraw any elements that are not working.

“Distant mountains will gradually fade to blue, and foreground elements will be darker with higher contrast”

tone and colour

ESTABLISH CORRECT VALUES AND RICH COLOUR AS A BASE FOR TEXTURES AND PHOTO OVERLAYS

In the next phase of your piece you will focus on establishing greyscale values and then overlaying colour. As a general rule, you should never paint in pure black or pure white. These values should only be used when illustrating the brightest part of the Sun, its reflection, or the black of space. Values and tones should also be defined and detailed like your line art. First, research photographer Ansel Adams and painter Thomas Moran's work, and study the values in their work. Both were experts in representing aerial, or atmospheric perspective, and a wide range of complementary tones. When working on your piece, remember to have darker, warmer colours and values in the foreground and lighter, cooler ones in the background. Since the city in this tutorial will incorporate a lot of glass and reflect tones from the sky and the surrounding landscape, you'll also want to research reflective light.



01 | ESTABLISH GREYSCALE GRADIENT
Let's start off with some aerial perspective. Create a new layer, title it 'Value', then tap (G) for your Gradient tool. For your left colour enter hex # 555555 and for the right enter hex # d7d7d7. Drag your gradient out from the bottom right corner to the tip of the right building, and change the layer blend mode to Multiply.



02 | MASK OUT SKY
Next, we want to mask the sky out. Click the line art layer and select the Magic Wand tool (W). At the top, set your tolerance to about 30 and click a point in the sky, and Shift+click any empty space. Ensure the lines in your landscape and buildings are all connected, or the Selection tool will creep in. Hit (Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+I) to reverse the selection. Now, click your Value layer and then the Add Layer Mask button.



03 | SEPARATE THE ELEMENTS
Create a new layer under your line art titled 'Sky Gradient'. Pick a mid-grey for the left colour and a light grey (hex# c0c0c0) for the right one and drag this diagonally down on your canvas from your top right, from dark to light. Set this layer to Multiply.



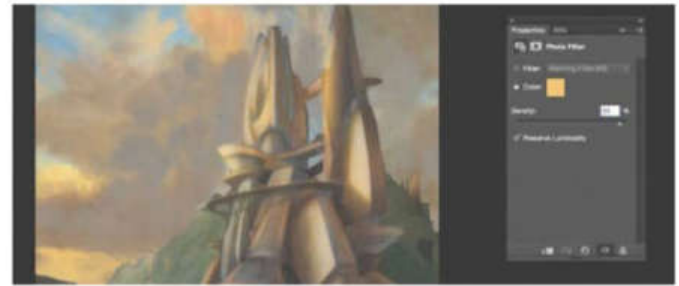
04 | REFINE WITH THE PEN TOOL
Use the Pen tool again to carve smooth, clean-edged shapes. Carefully trace your points over your line art. In this piece, the monorails, train terminal, and large glass panels of the building are outlined. Once your paths are enclosed, Right-click in Pen mode and hit Make Selection. Feather Radius should be 0, and Anti-aliased should be checked. Now, head to Select>Save Selection, and title it as you please. The selection is now saved in your Channels box, where you can hold Cmd/Ctrl and click the Channel title to activate it.



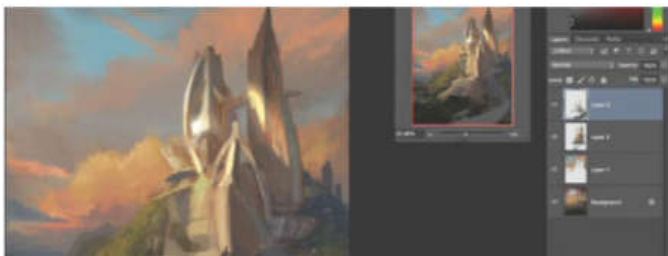
05 | HIGHLIGHTS AND SHADOWS
Create a new layer titled 'Highlights1' and set the blend mode to Soft Light. Grab a 60px Soft Round brush at 50% Hardness, with Shape Dynamics, Diameter and Transfer set to 0%. Working general to specific, build your highlights up with white, noting where the sunlight hits or reflects. Add a 'Shadows' layer set to Multiply, and do the same process with a medium grey. Build up shadows and highlights with various brushes and sizes. Houston Sharp's brushes contain a Hard Elliptical great for defining value (<http://bit.ly/1Fxo7Zv>).



06 | DETAILED TONES
After your shadows and highlights are painted in, you can now begin refining your tones and painting in details. Choose a Cloud brush from Tyler May's brush family, and with the Opacity and Minimum Diameter at about 50%, begin painting in the sky how you see fit. Don't worry about painting over any buildings, since you can always refine them with the Pen tool. Experiment with brushes in Multiply and Hard Light mode at this point, pushing your values further and preparing them for colour.



07 | COLOUR OVERLAY
Create several new layers above your greyscale layer that you can delete on a whim rather than erasing. Haze, highlights and greenery will be your standard colour overlays. Select a Soft Mechanical brush at transfer set to 0% and switch the layer blend mode to Color and begin painting. Also experiment with Overlay or Hard Light blend modes. When using this method, colours will seem very unnatural at first, but these are just the base colour layers that our custom brushes will detail later.



08 | REFINE WITH CUSTOM BRUSHES
Begin detailing the colours of the piece using several various cloud, foliage, and hard surface brushes from the links provided. You really need to observe light when it hits buildings and the reflective quality of glass to paint in the colours effectively. Emphasise your highlights by painting in colour dodge mode with a bright yellow and low Opacity brush. For distant mountains and trees, select a hard elliptical brush at 50% Minimum Diameter and Transfer. Remember atmospheric perspective. Distant mountains will gradually fade to blue, and foreground elements will be darker with higher contrast.



09 | PLACE RESOURCE IMAGES
After establishing your basic colour scheme and roughing in details, feel free to place resource images such as trees and clouds into your image for greater colour reference. Images can always later be used for photobashing techniques, but right now blend them with your underlying colour layer by painting away any unwanted sections with the layer mask mode. Open up Jonas De Ro's brush preset Sand Paint using his Dry basic and Paint brushes, blocking in your structures and the surrounding landscape.



Lens Flare: Creating bright blue rectangles set in Color Dodge mode, with a horizontal motion blur, gives a reflective and shiny effect

Winding Paths: The Pen tool was used to draw several curved bands, which encompass the building and gives a futuristic feel

Rock Walls: Jagged-edged shapes were drawn with the Lasso tool and painted in with the listed Rock brush to add miniature details

Textured Overlays: Images of glass and neon signs were placed in Overlay blend mode for heightened realism and a futuristic effect

Foreground Figures: Placing small images of people in the foreground gives the viewer a sense of scale and enlarges the structure

EFFECTS AND ADDITIONS

REFINE THE PIECE AND ADD FINISHING TOUCHES BY APPLYING YOUR PHOTO BLENDING AND CUSTOM BRUSH KNOWLEDGE

Detailing your artwork with various brushes is not the last step in bringing a piece to life. Photographs add a realistic element that cannot be matched by brushes alone. And photographs, when used in conjunction with certain brushes, will give the piece a life-like element with a painted feel. Often, you'll find certain photos online that match your piece compositionally, but don't fit your line art perfectly. Don't struggle with following your line art exactly, and be willing to change your final composition.

The most effective way to incorporate images is by creating Alpha Channels. Select an area of your canvas with either the Lasso tool, or make a selection

with the Pen tool, and then add a layer mask via the Layers panel. This will be your alpha channel. When inserting a photo, always go to File>Place Embedded instead of just opening an image and dragging it in. Placing it converts it to a Smart Layer, ensuring the quality isn't damaged no matter how many times you resize it. Place the image above your alpha channel layer in the Layers palette, Right-click on the alpha channel layer in the Layers palette, and create a clipping mask. This confines it to your new channel.

Images don't have to be confined to alpha channels, however. Place them in the correct layer

order, and they can build your architecture. Use Transform tools often, such as Distort and Warp, making sure to still follow your perspective guides. Also incorporate layer adjustments (clipped to your layer) to ensure any change to your image is reversible. Cmd/Ctrl+clicking the layer is a very effective method in keeping your brush strokes confined to your layer.

If you then want to add the finishing touches to your piece, such as haze, window highlights, or defined shadows within the layer parameters, you can create a new clipped mask layer for brushes right above your image.

ENHANCE YOUR PHOTOSHOP PAINTINGS

FIVE OUTSTANDING DIGITAL PAINTING PROGRAMS THAT PERFECTLY COMPLEMENT PHOTOSHOP AND HELP YOU TAKE YOUR PAINTINGS TO THE NEXT LEVEL



COREL PAINTER 2016

Web: www.corel.com

Price: £315 / \$429.00

Corel Painter's hyper-realistic brushes can behave like real media, including thick, fat impasto paint or runny liquid inks. It's fully compatible with Photoshop, allowing you to save in PSD format and even use Photoshop brushes, although some layer types are unique to Painter and will need to be merged down or converted before you take your work into Photoshop. A new Photoshop plug-in, Corel ParticleShop, allows Photoshop users to make use of some of Painter's brushes in Photoshop itself – check out our review on p84.



REBELLE

Web: www.escapemotions.com

Price: \$60 (£39 approx)

Escape Motions specialises in interesting digital art effects, as seen in its Amberlight and Flame Painter products. Rebelle, however, comes away from these crisp digital glows and into the world of watercolour, acrylic and dry media, which it reproduces remarkably well. Its proprietary .reb file format isn't compatible with Photoshop, but you can save in other formats so you can bounce your artwork over to your favourite software. You'll need to remember to hit the Fast Dry button and 'dry' your watercolour paint before exporting!



MISCHIEF

Web: www.madewithmischief.com

Price: Free or \$25 (£16 approx) for the premium version

Mischief was recently acquired by The Foundry (makers of Nuke and modo amongst other VFX programs) and is best known for its unique infinitely-scalable canvas, which allows you to create fine details and huge images. You can play with this in the free version, but to get the most from Mischief, invest in the \$25 premium version for full Photoshop compatibility so that you can really make use of its fantastic resolution capabilities.

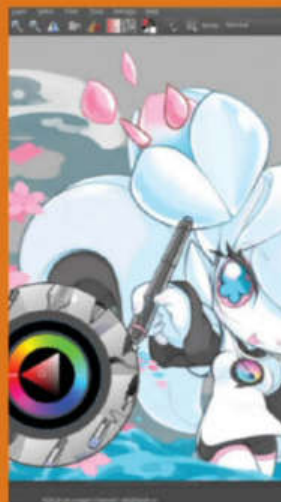


PAINTSTORM STUDIO

Web: www.paintstormstudio.com

Price: \$19 (£12 approx)

If you like making your own brushes in Photoshop, then give Paintstorm Studio a whirl, as it allows you to create and customise an almost infinite variety of mark-making tools. For fans of blending and the Mixer brush, it has a smart Dirty mode that replicates the look of brushes that have built up several different hues of paint, and it can pick up colours across layers for really true-to-life blending. It's PSD compatible too, so you can easily bounce your work in and out of Photoshop to make further adjustments to your images.



KRITA

Web: www.krita.org

Price: Free

This free painting program was created as an Open Source project and was originally based on poor-man's-Photoshop GIMP. Since 2009 it has focused solely on painting, and it can produce lush brush effects. As a Linux-based project it can be a bit of a pain to run on Macs – it is possible, although the developers admit that it's buggy – but don't let that put you off; there are high-end design and VFX studios using Krita in both Windows and Linux for its painting capabilities. On the plus side, it can load some Photoshop brushes in the .abr format, which is a nice addition, and of course it can save PSDs. There is a version on Steam called Krita Gemini that retails for £29.00, but this is PC-only.



Neel

PAINT A REALISTIC PORTRAIT

LEARN HOW TO PAINT SKIN, HAIR, JEWELLERY AND OTHER BEAUTIFUL DETAILS IN A CHARACTER PORTRAIT

Always start a painting with the questions "Who is this?" "Where do they live?" and "What time do you want to show in the painting?" This will help you to decide what you want to show and how you want to show it. In this tutorial we will learn how to paint realistic skin, hair, jewellery and many other things. You can choose to paint anyone's portrait or replicate this one while painting along with this tutorial. Painting portraits is not as tough as you may think. We just need to first sketch it properly and think about where the light is coming from. Photoshop is an amazing

painting tool if you love to paint. We can make our own brush presets, actions, assign personal favourite shortcuts and can do much more with these amazing tools.

To start the painting you can draw directly in Photoshop or sketch your base on paper with a pencil, then bring it into Photoshop and refine it. You will need to use a graphics tablet to give you the level of control over line and painting that you need to achieve a professional effect. So just open any version of Photoshop, load the supplied brushes from FileSilo, and start painting this awesome painting.

SET THE BASIC LAYOUT

START FROM A SKETCH TO BLOCK IN THE BASIC COLOURS

01 THE SKETCH

Always start a painting with a sketch. Press Cmd/Ctrl+N to open a new document and make it 240mm wide x 310mm high at 300dpi. You can make it any other size if you want to, this size will come out as A4 with extra bleed. Start with sketching on a separate layer because later we need to lower its opacity to paint under it.



02 THE FLESH MESH

This step is really helpful for painting portraits. It gives your 2D sketch a three dimensional look. So draw the mesh-like line above your sketch in a different layer. Try to think about the basic structure of the face, like eyeball socket, the bridge of the nose, the curve of the lips, cheekbones and so on, and how they come forward or recede back. Use reference materials or look in a mirror to help you.



03 START ON THE BACKGROUND

Always try to start the painting with the background; it makes the painting process easy because it lets us focus on our main subject. Select the brush named Background and choose a dark colour to paint. The background of a portrait shouldn't distract from the main focal point, which is why portraits usually have simple backgrounds like walls, curtains or simply a dark or plain colour.



OUR EXPERT

ABEER MALIK
<https://www.facebook.com/abeersartwork>

Abeer Malik is a self taught artist from India. She's a freelance concept artist/illustrator and loves to paint realistic portraits.

SOURCE FILES

You will be able to follow this tutorial step-by-step from start to finish using the resources on www.filesilo.co.uk. You will get the full brush set used in this tutorial, and two .png files of feathers.

WORK IN PROGRESS

FROM LINE SKETCH TO POLISHED, DETAILED PAINTING



Progress 1: Sketch the portrait



Progress 2: Blend the colours

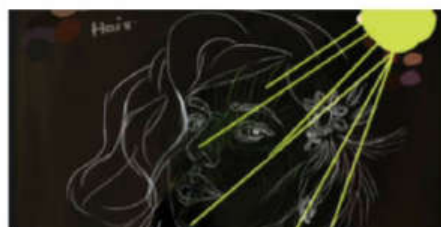


Progress 3: Use High Pass filter



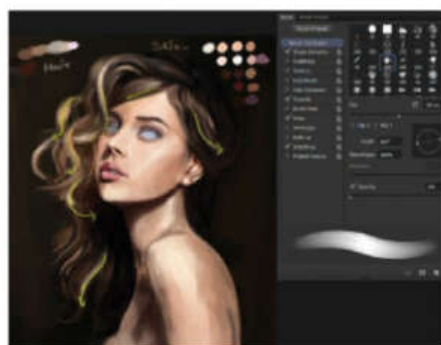
04 CHOOSE THE RIGHT COLOURS

To choose the colours for your painting, always think what you want from your character; where the person is at that time, where they belong, what time of the day you want to show, and how much light exposure you want in your character. Here we take very warm colours for the skin and hair. Choose the highlight colour according to your source light's colour. Do not choose a colour that is either too saturated or too grey; try to find middle-value colours to start the painting.



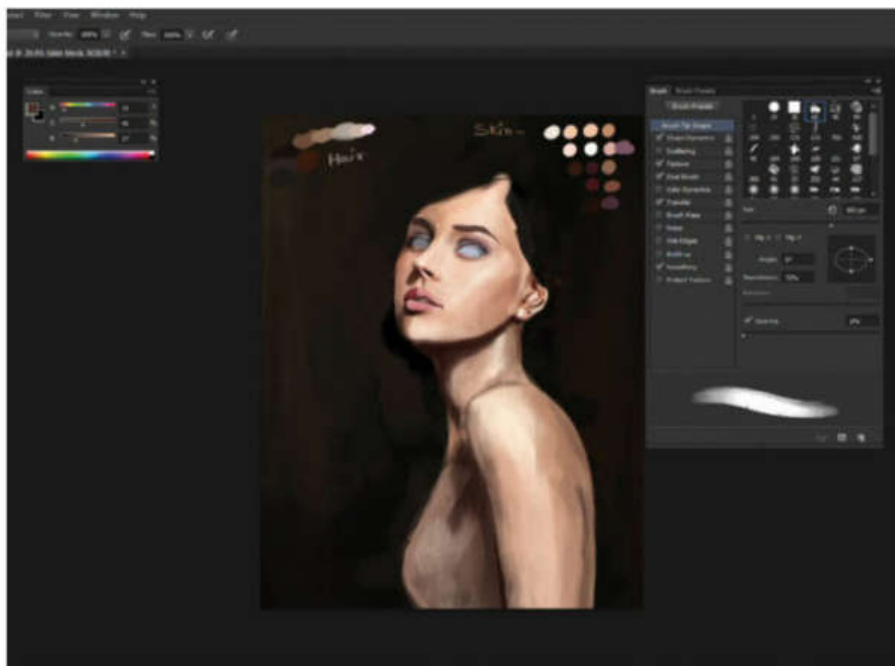
05 CONSIDER SHADOWS AND HIGHLIGHTS

Let's think about where the light is coming from, because it will guide us to place shadows and highlights correctly. Always remember that the light is the soul of any painting; no matter how much you work hard with colour and shapes, if your lighting is wrong your painting is dead. In our painting the light is coming from the top left and the exposure is high, so the cast shadow would be very sharp. This effect is known as high key in photography, or chiaroscuro in painting.



07 BLOCK IN HAIR

As we have blocked in the face, we will block in the hair too. But to paint the hair more easily divide the hair into sections and choose the light and dark colours according to the light. Here we will use the brush named Hair Blocking at 70px in size with Opacity at 80% and Flow at 60%. After that choose the brush named Hair Blocking Two and lower the Opacity to 60% with Pressure Sensitivity set to On. This brush has texture and shape in it, so it will add more volume to the hair shape.



06 START BLOCKING IN

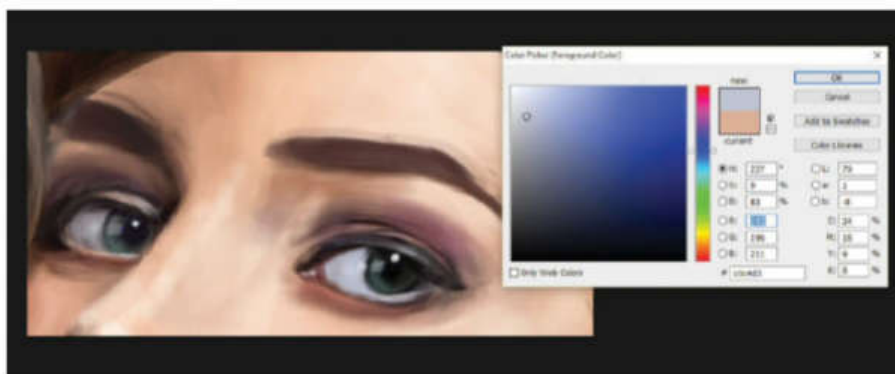
So from here the fun part begins: colouring! So to start the painting, we will add the midtone colours with the brush on FileSilo named Blocking brush. The brush size should be over 100px with the Opacity and Flow set at 100%. It's good to choose a hard brush with some texture. Do not start the painting with a round soft brush because it makes

the painting look sloppy. Do not add very dark or light colours at this stage. Take two shades of light and dark from your midtones, and block in the colour according to the light direction. It can be helpful to set up a lamp that replicates the light direction you want, and observe how the lighting behaves on objects beneath it.

QUICK TIP: ROTATE YOUR CANVAS

To tackle complex shapes and get a new view of your painting it is necessary to keep on rotating your canvas. It's useful for finding mistakes to see your work from another angle. The new angle will

detach you slightly from the piece, for a fresh perspective. You can do this by using the Rotation tool (R) or just flipping the canvas horizontally or vertically using the Image>Image rotation option.



08 ADD HER EYES

Eyes are the most important feature of the face; they speak about the character's feelings and much more. To start painting the eyes, take the brush named Skin and lower its Opacity to 70-80%, open the Color Picker and select a very pale light blue-grey colour (If your character is considerably older than this one,

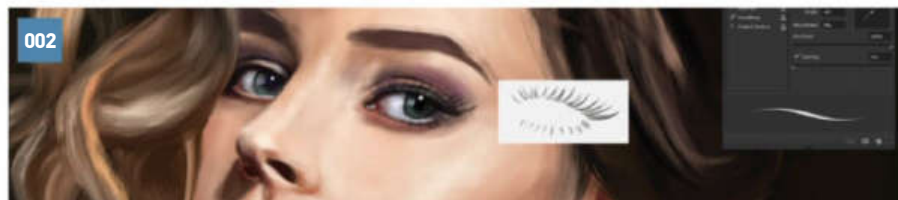
choose a yellow-grey instead). Outline the lower and bottom eyelid with a dark blue-brown colour, at the corners add a little reddish tone to it. For painting the iris choose a dark green colour and for the pupil choose a dark green-blue colour (You can vary these colours depending on your portrait). Last, add a highlight dot.

■ ADD DETAILS TO YOUR PAINTING

ADD FACE DETAILS AND BLEND THE COLOURS

09 | EYELASHES AND EYEBROWS

Make a new layer, select the Rotate tool by hitting R, and rotate your canvas by 180 degrees. Select the Eyelashes brush from FileSilo, make it 10px in size with Opacity and Flow at 100% and grab the darkest colour in your palette (but not pure black). Try to paint the lashes in a group. As we've already blocked in the eyebrows with dark colour, now take the Hair brush and make it around 15px in with Opacity at 90% and Flow at 75% with Pressure Sensitivity on. To make it look fuller take dark and light and paint the hair outside to inside then inside to outside and so on.



001 | BRUSH SETTING FOR EYELASHES

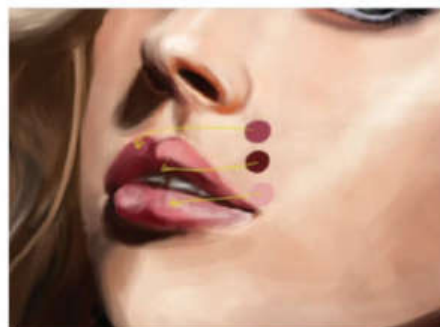
To paint the Eyelashes, select the Eyelashes brush. Set the brush size around 20px. And always keep press hard with Pressure Sensitivity on to get a tapered end

002 | PAINT EYELASHES

When painting eyelashes, paint the midtone, dark tone and then the light tone. At the last select the same brush and erase away the outer edges. Start painting the eyelashes from the eyelid, and try to paint in a group. Paint them according to the eyes' shape

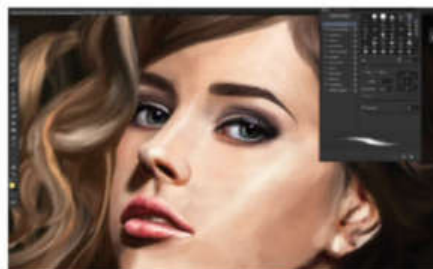
003 | PAINT EYEBROWS

Paint eyebrows the same way as the eyelashes: midtone, then dark, then light. To finish them off select the same brush and delete the outer edges to make it more realistic, just like the eyelashes



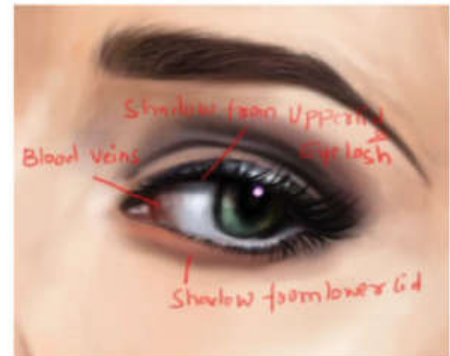
11 | CREATE FULLER LIPS

Think about the shape of the lips; you can use the Flesh Mesh created in Step 2 here to guide you. Take the Skin Blending with Texture brush at a small size. Add a dark red (but not saturated) colour to the lips. Do not add light colours to the left side of the lips, because the light is coming from the left so it would be dark. Also remember that the lower lip is always lighter in colour compared to the upper lip. Paint the corner of the lips and edges so that it merges into the skin.



12 | MODEL THE NOSE

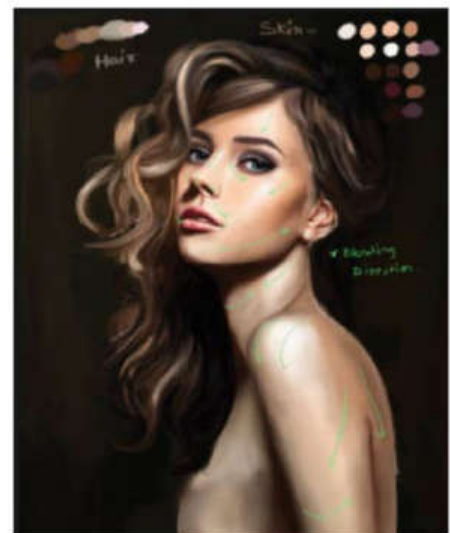
Use the flesh mesh to guide you here as well. Add the lighter and darker colour according to the shape of the nose. The thing to remember is that the light penetrates through the nostrils and it creates sub-surface scattering (where light changes the colours of a semi-opaque object as it travels through it). So never paint the nose too dark: always add a little orange or red colour to its edge. A good way to add orange colour is to make a new layer and set it to Soft Light blend mode, lower its Opacity by 80%, select the less saturated orange colour and paint it onto the edges of the nose.



10 | DETAIL THE EYES

Now make a new layer and set it to Color Dodge. Lower its Opacity to 50%. Take a light brown color and the Hair Blocking Two brush from FileSilo. Now take a light purple colour and add it to the highlight dot; it gives the effect of a flash reflecting in the eyes. The eyes are round in shape so add the dark colour to the corner of the white area to make it more realistic. Also add a little highlight to the lower eyelid.

“Do not start the painting with a soft round brush because it will make the painting sloppy”



13 | BLEND THE COLOURS

We have blocked all essential colours into our painting, so now it's time to blend it and make it smooth – not super smooth, otherwise it will look like plastic. To blend the skin we will use the brush named Skin or Skin Smoothing. Drop the Opacity to 80% and Flow to 60% and use Pressure Sensitivity. To blend the skin colour, keep on selecting the colour from the skin by pressing the Alt/Option key. Blend the skin according to its shape and direction – for example, along the line of the cheekbone or jaw.

FINALISE THE PAINTING

ADD ACCESSORIES AND USE FILTERS TO FINALISE THE PAINTING



14 SKIN TEXTURE AND PORES

Make two layers; set one to Multiply and the second to Linear Dodge (Add) mode, lower their Opacity by 80%. On the Multiply layer, select the Pores brush from FileSilo with Opacity and Flow at 80%, take a medium-dark colour and paint it. Take the Skin Texture brush and paint around the eyes and nose. Do the same on the Linear Dodge (Add) layer with a light colour. Make a layer mask on both the layers. Now paint with a Soft Round brush to hide some textures and make it more natural.

15 ADD DETAILING TO THE HAIR

Make two new layers above the Hair Block layer, one set to Multiply and the second to Linear Dodge (Add). On the Multiply layer use the Thick Soft Hair brush at a size of more than 100px with 90% Opacity. By pressing Alt/Option, keep on selecting colours from the hair and painting them on. Do the same on the Linear Dodge (Add) layer. Now make a new layer and set it to Color Dodge with Opacity around 70%, select the Hair brush, make it small, and paint with a lighter colour. Then take a small hard brush and paint single strands of hair.



HIGH PASS FILTER

The High Pass filter is very versatile. It's a great sharpening tool. Sharpening is always the last step in post-processing. This is because the amount of sharpening you need to apply varies according to how you intend to show your painting. The High Pass filter is like embossing essential details in the

painting without making it too sharp. Always use it in Normal blend mode and later set it to Overlay mode. Using it in Normal mode gives the freedom to choose how much intensity of sharpening you want in the painting. Also you can add a layer mask to soften some areas.



QUICK TIP: NAME YOUR LAYERS

Always try to keep your layers in groups and name each individual layer. It speeds up the processing time and makes it easy to make changes later if you need to.



17 ADD THE FEATHERS

Open the file named Feather from FileSilo and copy it to your painting. Now place it according to your design. Select the image and copy it in a new layer. Hit Cmd/Ctrl+T to bring up the Transform box, right-click and select Warp and pull the handles to give it shape. Select the Distort option to give it more perspective. Press Cmd/Ctrl+U to bring up Hue/Saturation, check the Colorize option on, and give the feathers blue and green colours. For the dress, open the file called Peacock Feather and bring it to your painting, then organise it by copying and using the Transform tool as before.



18 ALMOST DONE

Make a new layer at the top. Now go to Image>Apply Image, don't change any settings and click OK. It will copy the whole image into a single layer. Now add a new layer with the blending mode set to Soft Light and paint the lower and upper eyelids with a green colour to make eyes more attractive. Merge this layer down. Now create a Vibrance adjustment layer and increase the Vibrance by +45, softly masking it around less saturated areas. It will enhance the green and orange colours in the painting.

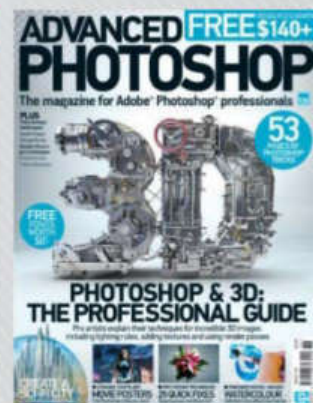
19 FINAL TOUCHES

Copy the Final painting layer, go to Filter>Other>High Pass and set its Radius to around 1.8 px. Change its layer mode to Overlay, lower its Opacity by 80% and mask it around the soft areas like lips and cheeks. Now merge this layer to the bottom layer. Copy it again and set it to Soft Light mode, and lower its Opacity by 10-15%. It glazes the painting and make its colours pop. Play with other settings and make changes, until you feel satisfied with your painting.



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PAPER BOAT FISHERMAN

AMR EL SAADANY

AN IMAGINATIVE WAY OF LOOKING AT THE WORLD IS KEY TO AMR EL SAADANY'S CREATIVE COMPOSITES

Cairo-based advertising and commercial photographer Amr El Saadany (www.amrsaadany.com) explains his relationship to Photoshop thus: "Being in the commercial advertising world, I get to work on many different types of projects with different creative directions, but no matter how far it goes, nothing beats personal projects that allow me to take things into what I would like to call 'my realistically unrealistic world', where everything is possible."

"Being a photographer and a Photoshop geek really makes it easier for me to project my imagination into real artwork that I can share with

people. And I always believe that if I can imagine it, I can create it."

With high-end advertising campaigns for the likes of Heinz under his belt, this creative is a master of polished Photoshop imagery, and takes inspiration for his personal projects from all sorts of places. "Paper Boat Fisherman was inspired by a photo I took during my last trip to the UK, at Richmond Park. Looking at the photo, the calmness of the water and the clear reflections, I thought that's the perfect location for a fisherman, but in my realistically unrealistic world, a fisherman will not go fishing in an ordinary boat, nor catch ordinary fish..."



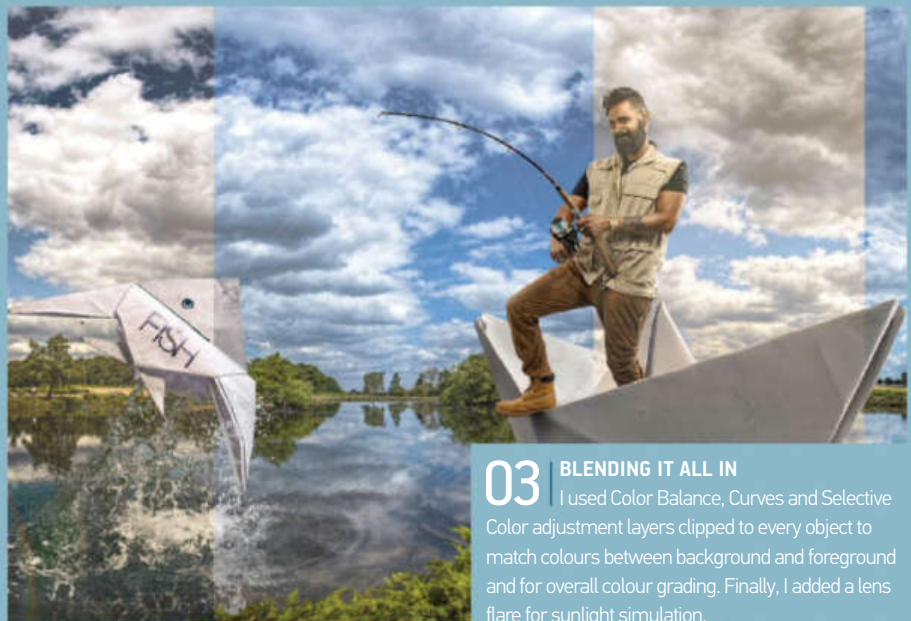
© Amr El Saadany

01 | BRING EVERYTHING TOGETHER Objects were selected and masked out using the Pen tool and layer masks, then placed on the background image. Water splashes and foreground bushes were masked out using Channels masking techniques.



02 **EXTRA DETAILS**
Water ripples were created using gradients and Distort filters then blended in using the Soft Light blending mode. Also shadows were added on a new layer set to Multiply blending mode.

“Being a photographer and a Photoshop geek really makes it easier for me to project my imagination into real artwork that I can share with people”



03 **BLENDING IT ALL IN**
I used Color Balance, Curves and Selective Color adjustment layers clipped to every object to match colours between background and foreground and for overall colour grading. Finally, I added a lens flare for sunlight simulation.



OUR EXPERT

RODRIGO MARINELLI

rodrigo_marinelli.prosite.com

Rodrigo Marinelli is a 31-year-old art director with over ten years experience in the industry. He is interested in anything and everything that is related to creativity, and his main focus is on image manipulation.

SOURCE FILES

On FileSilo you will find the original superhero image to get you started. We also used a variety of stock images for the fire effects from www.shutterstock.com, which you can download or you can use your own images if you prefer.

MASTER LIGHTING IN COMPOSITES

LEARN HOW TO USE PROFESSIONAL LIGHTING
TECHNIQUES TO PERFECT YOUR COMPOSITES

Getting the lighting just right when you are creating a composite can be very challenging, but it is incredibly important if you want the finished piece to look believable. Follow our tutorial and take your artwork to the next level by learning how to use professional lighting techniques to turn a normal image into a realistic superhero styled masterpiece. Discover how to crop images with a dark

background in just one click, and find out how to light your image with a fiery glow. We will also cover the importance of matching tools and blend modes together in order to get the best results, as well as how to work with lighting without losing any colour information.

This tutorial should provide you with the knowledge and ability to master lighting in all of your future artwork.

WORK IN PROGRESS THE STRIKE OF A SUPERHERO



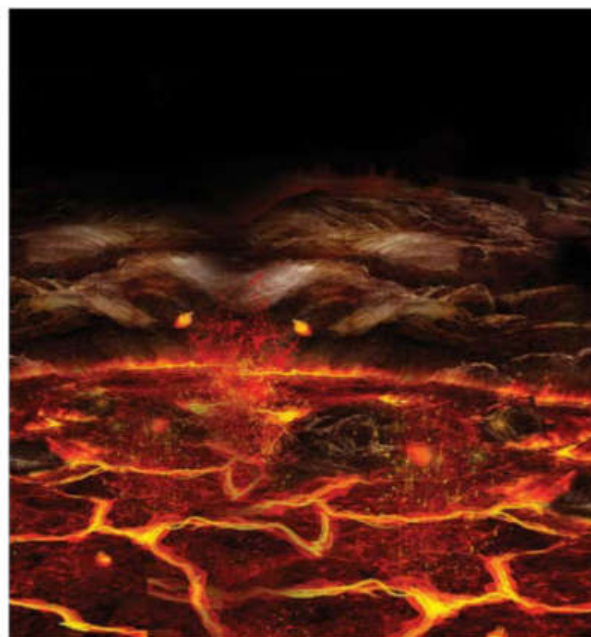
Progress 1: Create a hot floor



Progress 2: Add superhero lighting



Progress 3: Attention to details



01 | START WITH THE FLOOR

Create a new file, 21 x 13.5 cm, with a 100% black background. To build the floor we used one image (Image: 196635242 from [shutterstock.com](https://www.shutterstock.com)) that we duplicated and flipped to create a whole image. At this point it is essential to keep in mind that we want to build a dark scene, so black should be a prominent colour. We only want to use the bottom half of this image so create a mask and erase the lava in the top half with a smooth brush.



02 | INSERT A DARK SKY

Now we will add the sky using the cloudy elements of image: 184079207 from [shutterstock.com](https://www.shutterstock.com). Always remember that the scenario should be dark, because it will help with the fire effects that we'll be adding later. To avoid losing any colour information, make adjustments using the settings menu. To give the sky the desired tone you should use the Brightness and Saturation tool to take out all the saturation. Then after that add red into the composition with the Color Balance tool.

“You must go deep down into your imagination to think about everything that could make your scene more realistic”



03 | BEGIN ADDING FIERY ELEMENTS

Next we'll start adding fiery elements to the scenario using the parts of image: 184079207 from [shutterstock.com](https://www.shutterstock.com). Every image with a black background can be easily cut with just one click. All you have to do is change the blend mode from Normal to Screen. Knowing the functions of the blend modes is fundamental to the construction of any image. Having this knowledge in mind you can invent new combinations that will make your art more real. Add the fire elements that go behind the main image. You can add a mask to repair some details.

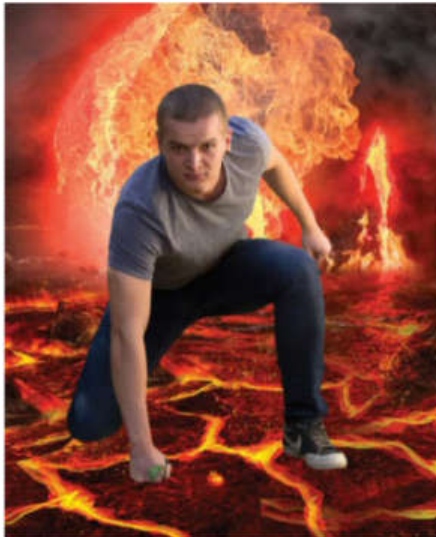


04 | CONSIDER THE DETAILS

Details are key to making a complex scene. You must go deep down into your imagination to think about everything that could make your scene more realistic. So we add some explosions on the sides of the picture. Use images: 79509298, 223794127, 149427977 and 289427945 from [shutterstock.com](https://www.shutterstock.com). The procedure to cut out the fire image is the same as in Step 3 – change the blend mode from Normal to Screen. The construction of a good scene is very important to the success of your composition. With the backdrop finished you will be able to be more precise with the superhero's lighting later.

■ QUICK TIP: USE THE SETTINGS MENU

To avoid losing any colour information, make any adjustments using the settings menu. Using this will automatically create a mask. To delete colour use the Brush tool (B) with the black colour selected, if you want to return the original colour, use the Brush tool with the white colour selected.



05 | PLACE THE HERO

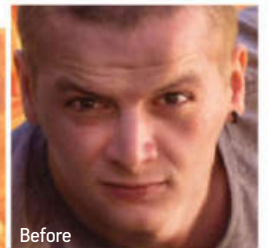
Now the fun part begins, we will place the image of our superhero – available on FileSilo – into the scene. The first step to mixing the picture with the scene is to apply a 3px feather (Shift+F6). Perhaps this is the part that will require the most of your previous Photoshop knowledge. The great secret is not to memorise what each tool does, but it is knowing what you can do and create by mixing them.

06 | WARM THE SCENE

There is no quick fix or magic trick to getting the lighting just right. It will take a lot of practise to effectively translate your creative vision into the scene believably. A good tip to improve your style is to always check references – it serves to warm up your brain first before creating your own scene. In this step start work on the image's tone, duplicate the layer (Cmd/Ctrl+J) and paint it (Alt/Option+Delete) with red then change the layer blend mode to Colour at 10%.

07 | FOCUS ON HIS FACE

Let's get started with the lighting on the superhero's face. For that you must use the Burn tool (O) to enhance the shadows and the Dodge tool (O) to enhance the lights. At this stage make sure you don't overdo the details. One trick you can use before starting to treat the image is to duplicate the layer (Cmd/Ctrl+J), because if you make any mistakes you can create a mask and erase them easily.

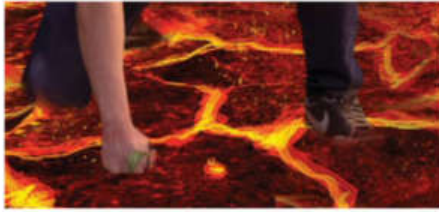


08 | MAKE A QUICK MASK

When you work with lighting, you should always be aware of all the details, in this case we will make a Quick Mask (Q+Brush tool) to select the blue part of his shoulder. This is a very good tool because you can select exactly the area that must be changed. The next step is to use the Color Balance tool (Cmd/Ctrl+B) to change the blue colour to red. A High Pass filter (Filter>Other>High Pass) should also be applied to enhance the details.

09 | RETOUCH THE SKIN

The secret of this step is to always think smooth when you are making a skin treatment. It's essential that you keep the important facial details – you only want to get rid of unwanted wrinkles, pimples or blemishes. We suggest that you use the Patch tool to make small adjustments. This tool is extremely efficient for skin treatment. Do not be afraid to zoom right in on the image in order to make your edits – even the tiniest of details have to be correct in order for the image to be believable.



10 ERASE DETAILS

At this stage we will begin to integrate our superhero more within the scene, for this you should apply a mask to the foot and knee, giving the idea that it is actually covered by fire caused by his punch to the ground. You'll need to delete a part of the image, remember to create a mask and select the area that you want to delete with the Brush tool set to black. Always have in your mind that you need to preserve the photo, so whenever possible, use masks.



11 USE ADJUSTMENT LAYERS

We are working with an extremely detailed image with complex lighting, so it is important that every hour you rest for at least five minutes. When you return to the image you will often be able to see if there are any further adjustments that you need to make. In this case, to enhance the colours of fire you will have to do some adjustments with Levels, Brightness/Contrast and the Photo Filter tool.



13 SET FIRE TO HIS ARMS

Now it is time to make the scene even more interesting. For this, using the same principle as in Step 3, you will add fire to the arms and hands of our superhero. Use image: 161205068 from [shutterstock.com](https://www.shutterstock.com). The more detail you add, no matter how small it may seem, the more interesting your scene will become. It is always nice to see a scene where there are many added images with harmony.

QUICK TIP: LOOK AROUND

When you work with light manipulation you need to do research and look at a lot of reference images in order to fully understand

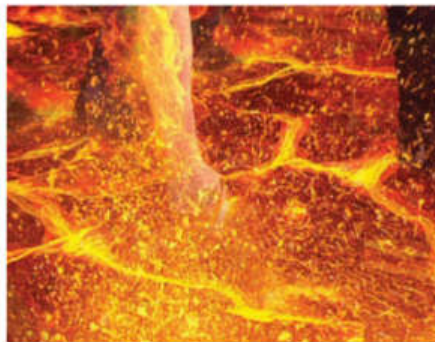
how lighting acts in different environments. Be aware of everything around you and experiment with different effects.



12 PLAY WITH THE LIGHTING

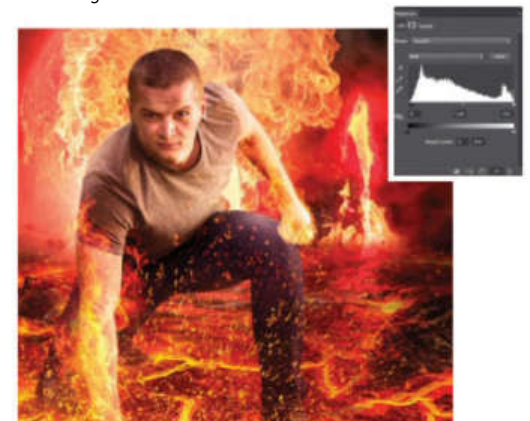
Next we are going to make the edges of the image darker, for this duplicate the hero image, select the picture and then go to Select>Modify>Contract by 30px, in sequence you will apply a feather (Shift+F6) with 120px and press Delete twice. Finally you will leave this

layer in Multiply. Another trick is to imagine where the backlight will invade the main photo, for that you need to use the Pen tool to make some blank forms and apply the Gaussian Blur (Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur) and put the shapes in Soft Light mode.



14 ADD FIRE TO HIS PUNCH

The image is almost ready, now it's time to add some important details that will make a lot of difference. In this step we will add more sparks to represent the impact that the punch caused to the ground. The principle is the same as Step 3: set the blend mode from Normal to Screen and use images: 223794127 and 289427945 from [shutterstock.com](https://www.shutterstock.com). The challenge is in knowing when your image needs more detail added and when there is too much going on. If you are not sure our tip is to show the image to someone who has never seen it and ask their opinion.



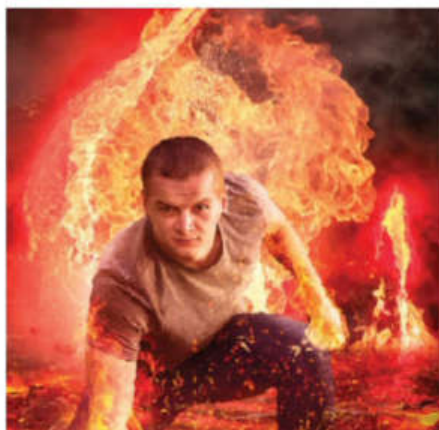
15 MAKE MORE ADJUSTMENTS

It's very common when you are working with complex scenarios to make adjustments at different times throughout the process. This is because your perception changes every second. To create harmony between all the elements in the scene click (Cmd/Ctrl+G) to create another adjustment layer, this time thinking about the entire scene, then make adjustments using the Levels, Brightness, Contrast and Photo Filter tools.



16 | DARKEN THE SCENE
We need to darken some parts of the scene, including the sky and the base of the rocks. This step is very important in order to highlight that the main focal point of the image is the superhero and the fire. For that you have to create a new layer (Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+N) and use the Brush tool to paint it black. To make the light more realistic, change the blend mode from Normal to Soft Light.

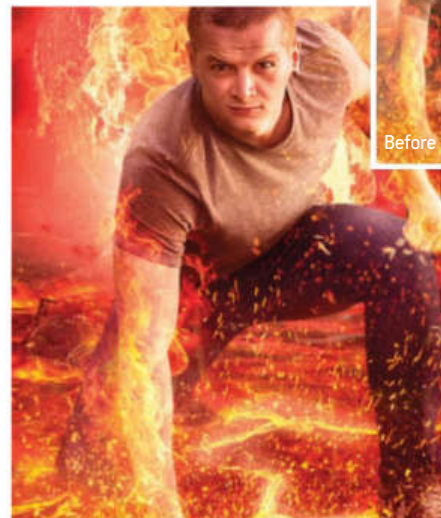
“Note that many lighting details are made with the combination of a brush and the blend mode”



19 | WORK ON THE FIRE
We are almost there! In this step we will add the fire blurring effect. Duplicate all the layers – Select All then press Cmd/Ctrl+J and make it all a single layer (Cmd/Ctrl+E). After that, go to the Filter Gallery (Filter>Filter Gallery) and apply the Glass filter (Filter Gallery>Distort>Glass). After that, make a mask to erase the effects on the superhero's face. The idea of this mask is to leave this blurring effect smooth and real.



17 | ADD SMOKE EFFECTS
Now let's make the strength of our superhero more evident, and add more details to the cracks on the ground. For this, create a new layer (Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+N) and use the Brush tool to go over the lines of lava in white. Once you have done that change the layer blend mode from Normal to Overlay. It is important that you choose a smooth brush to make the outline. This effect will make your image smoky. It may be a small detail, but it is very important.



18 | INTENSIFY THE GLOW
To intensify the fire colour on the clothes and face, create a new layer (Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+N) and with the Brush tool make a smooth circle in yellow with 30% Opacity and change the blend mode from Normal to Overlay. Note that many lighting details are made with the combination of a brush and a blend mode, so it's very important to have a good technical knowledge of the Photoshop tools.



20 | FINISH THE FIRE HERO
Create a final adjustment layer (Cmd/Ctrl+G) so the result is more vibrant and harmonised. For that you have to use the High Pass filter (Filter>Other>High Pass) and Brightness and

Contrast tools. As we are working with warm colours, you should enforce the lights and shadows of our superhero, for this use the Burn and Dodge tools. Be careful not to overdo it.



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Casimir.Lee
2015. 08. 01. 16:50



XINJIANG

CASIMIR LEE

FIND OUT HOW THIS ARTIST CREATED HIS INTRICATE AND CULTURALLY INSPIRED PAINTING

Taiwanese artist Casimir Lee (casimir.artstation.com) started his career designing prints for bed sheets and pillow covers using both traditional and digital media. "It's an interesting job, but I was hungry for more challenges. Thus, I decided to focus on digital paintings and was hired as a character designer for a game company... Now, I continue to stay active in the industry as a freelance character designer and doing art creation," he explains.

Lee's uncle was in part responsible for this beautiful piece of art. "My uncle opened a restaurant in Xinjiang and I was thinking maybe I could draw a picture of work consistent with the style of restaurant. [He] went to Xinjiang few months ago, but unfortunately I was unable to go with him. But I have heard from him about the beautiful scenery and kind people. By combining what I heard from my uncle and gathering of resources I found on Xinjiang, I created the Xinjiang dancer."

"I use Photoshop just as another alternative to traditional drawing. Using mostly the Round brush, Round Airbrush and Charcoal brushes. By using the impasto technique, I use these brushes and layers stacking [to] make a thick coating of oil painting and lighting effects. This keeps the painting looking hand drawn and prevents it from looking too digital... Images, poetries, history and songs are all crucial for the creative development stage.

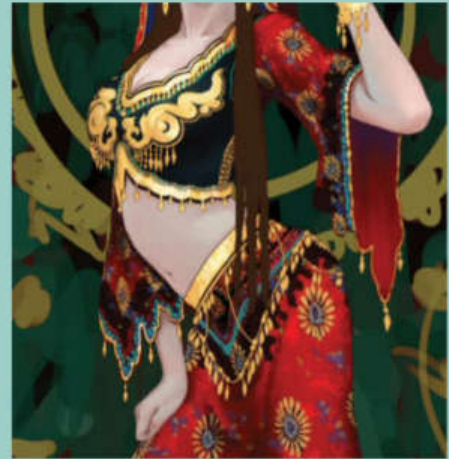
"[I try] to visualise an image in my mind, and then start drawing the character's face and pose."



01 | START WITH COMPOSITION
Laying out the character's poses, roughing out the design of the costume, placement of accessories and expression.



02 | EXPRESSION AND EMOTION
Focusing on the character's expression and emotion. [I placed the] importance on the intricate details of the character's look, hoping to bring out the soul of the character.



03 | PAINTING THE DETAILS
[I used] references on the subject matter to help [with] painting out details and [the] design on the costume.



04 | BACKGROUND COLOUR
With the overall character look almost done, I start working on the background colour.



05 | FINISHING TOUCHES
[I then used] the icon design inspired from Xinjiang's food spices and integrated them into the background art, adding visual flavour to the entire image, thus completing the artwork.



PAINT STRIKING TYPE EFFECTS

CREATE YOUR OWN PAINTED TYPOGRAPHY BY MIXING TRADITIONAL PAINT WITH PHOTOSHOP TECHNIQUES

Combining traditional paint with digital Photoshop techniques is a creative way to take your typography to the next level. Follow this tutorial to discover a relatively simple way to create a paint based text effect that is ultimately flexible. This is a mix of analogue and Photoshop to give a hand rendered digital look that is suitable for various applications,

from campaign headlines, through to web headers and straplines.

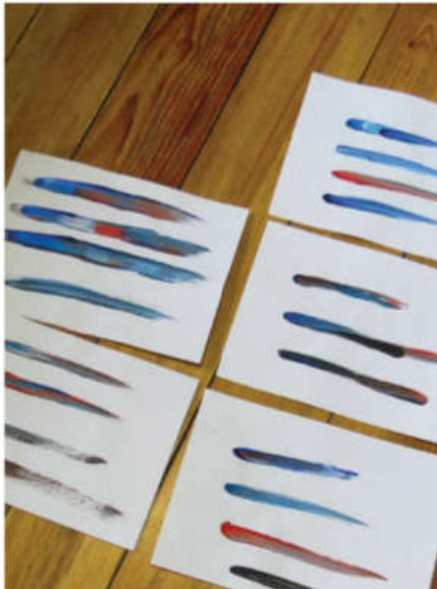
You will need to go back to basics and begin with a hand painted technique, then finish off and manipulate digitally. The result will vary depending on your chosen paint technique and the choice of type style, but you should end up with something wonderfully creative and painterly.

PREPARE TO PAINT

START WITH PAINTING STROKES WITH ACRYLIC PAINT

01 | START ANALOGUE

Get a set of acrylic paints and add dots to a plate, then pick up your paintbrush and simply dip it into numerous colours. Now, swoosh it across the paper until you get a mix of all the different colours. This will take a little experimenting to get right, but it's all part of the fun of mixing analogue and digital together.

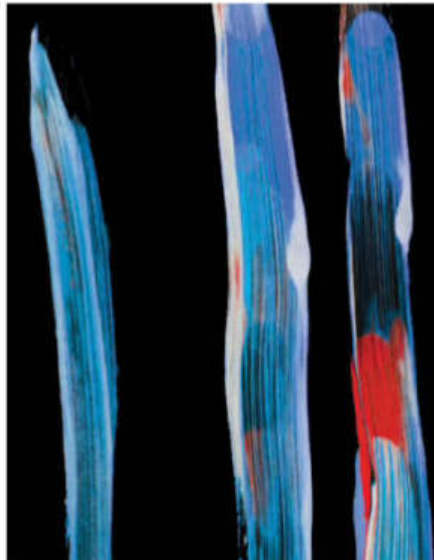


03 | ENHANCE IT DIGITALLY

You should have an idea of how your piece will look and what colours you are going to use from the initial colours used within the paint phase. You can however adjust colour to your choice using Hue and Saturation. This is under the Image>Adjustment menu. Don't over saturate though, just add a little spark and contrast to the swooshes.

02 | CLEAN IT UP

Scan your paint samples, remember to let them dry first though! Then remove the background. Simply add a black layer behind the paint and delete all the white sections. The black is there so you can see any remaining white more easily. This will take a little while and can be tedious, but bear with it. Do this with a few so you have a good selection of samples to work with.



OUR EXPERT

NEIL DUERDEN
www.neilduerden.co.uk
@neilduerden

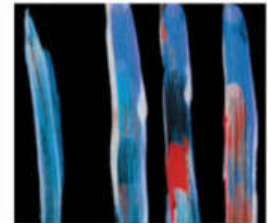
A self confessed Mac monkey, exceeding briefs for blue chip clients globally.

SOURCE FILES

On FileSilo (www.filesilo.co.uk/advancedphotoshop) you will find a selection of paint strokes that you can use to follow along with this tutorial, or you can create your own if you prefer.

WORK IN PROGRESS

FROM TRADITIONAL PAINT TO DIGITAL MASTERPIECE



Progress 1: Start with strokes



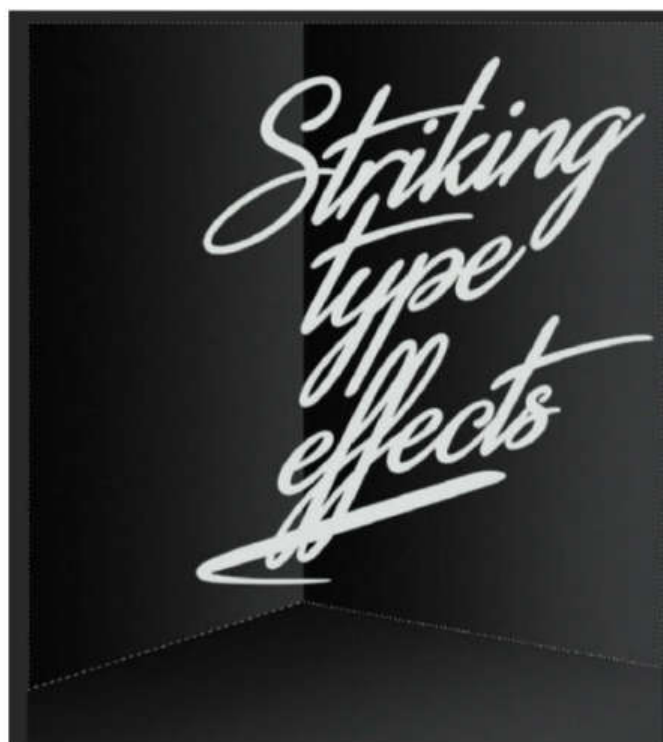
Progress 2: Paint the text



Progress 3: Finishing touches



04 | CREATE YOUR TYPE Now onto the fun part. Create whatever type style you wish to emulate in Illustrator, typography that flows is the best for this approach. This will only be a rough guide so don't be too critical. Make sure it's not too tight as the paint won't work if it's bunched up too tight.



05 | WORK ON THE BACKGROUND Copy your type from Illustrator and directly into Photoshop on a new layer. Now behind this create a layer filled with black. Then create a layer above this using the Gradient tool for your background planes, select the angles you wish this perspective to run at with the Polygon Lasso tool and fill it to the colour depth you wish (blacks are best).



06 | WARP IT Open up a paint sample you prepared earlier then Cut and Paste it into your document above the template layer. Now, using the Edit>Transform>Warp function, shape it by pulling the nodes to follow the shape of your text. Make it as twisty as you feel will look best in order to get the desired result, remember though, this needs to be legible! Double-click when you have it in the right place and shape. Repeat this with other samples until you have built up your lettering.



07 | STAY ORGANISED Collect these layers and put them all in one folder in the Layers palette. This may sound like common sense, but it's easy to get carried away and in later stages you regret it when you have hundreds of layers all called layer 4845 copy 78. Name the folders in a logical fashion too.



08 | NOW REPEAT Continue Step 6 and 7 until you have built all the letters in your word. Remember to leave enough space for the letters to breathe and be legible. Not too many twists and not too many conflicting colours. Even though this is a complex look, simplicity is key!

ADD DETAILS AND REFINE YOUR TYPE

MAKE THE LETTERING REALLY POP WITH SHADOWS AND THE BURN TOOL



09 WORK ON THE DETAILS

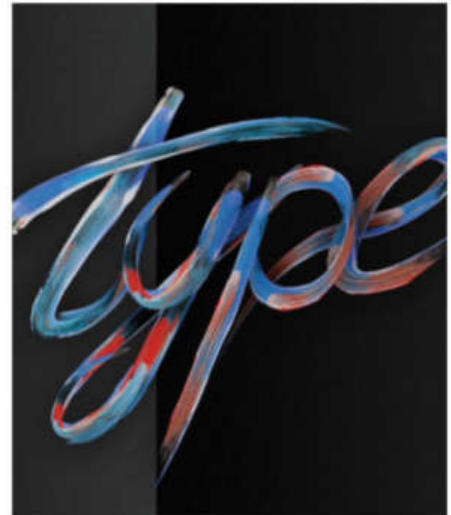
Now go into your piece in a little more detail and add layer masks to layers that have abnormalities. Photoshop will throw some strange shapes into the mix when you warp and it's easiest to hide them with a layer mask and paint black with the relevant mask selected. If you paint too much out then simply paint white in, to make it visible again. You can also clean up edges in the same way and improve legibility further.



10 ADD SOME SHADOWS

Add a drop shadow to the folder for each letter group, this will make them pop a little. It needs to be subtle and barely visible with just enough shadow to make them stand off your background. Too much and it will detract from the look. Use your judgement depending on the background you created earlier.

“Leave enough space for the letters to breathe”



11 NOW DUPLICATE

Duplicate whole word. Then hide the original group. On the duplicate group use the Burn tool to add detail and depth on sections that go behind other sections to give flow. Make sections that go behind a little darker to give more depth and enhance the dynamics of the piece. Again, be subtle as too much will make the piece too dark and moody.



12 REPEAT FOR THE OTHER WORDS

Repeat all the above steps if you are building more than one word. Remember you have your earlier template layer as a rough guide for construction purposes. Space is key, this has been stated already, but it really will need space to work properly. You will be tempted to make the type interact with the word above and below, but try and resist or you'll just end up with a pile of paint strokes!



13 ADD SOME BACKGROUND DETAIL

Now go back to your background group and add a few details. These could be paintbrushes against the wall, a texture added by pasting a layer and Multiplying (layer mode in Layers palette), or even a surface texture added to your gradients. The choice is yours depending on what your text is all about. Also you could add a few paint splats and even drips if you like. Just have fun.

MAKE IT POP

NOW SHARPEN UP YOUR TYPE AND ADD SOME FINAL DETAILS TO FINISH IT OFF

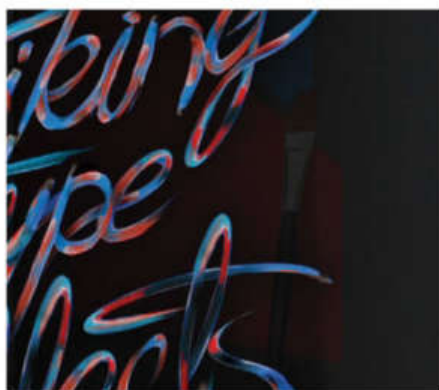


14 HAVE A BREAK

Have a break from your design for a hour or two and go for a run or walk just to get it out of your mind as you've been staring at it for a while and it will have become precious to you. Come back and look at the piece with fresh eyes and decide if anything needs changing before you go to the final steps, does anything need cleaning or does the colour need tweaking. If so, do it now!

NEIL'S TOP TIP

Quite often when you are halfway through a piece you look at it and think, 'why am I doing this, it's simply not working' This is often the case with Photoshop and the end result can be down to the last 10 per cent of your work in some cases. So experiment. Try new things and find combinations of compositions and techniques that work together perfectly. Remember the important thing is to have fun, as this will show clearly in your work.



17 ADD MORE DETAIL

Add a little colour to the rear wall, this could be shapes that follow the perspective or splats. These are simply enhancements and you don't want them taking the limelight away from the typography you have created. You can use various modes of layer effects here from multiplying the layers down to colour. Experiment to get a unique look and fits with your subject matter.



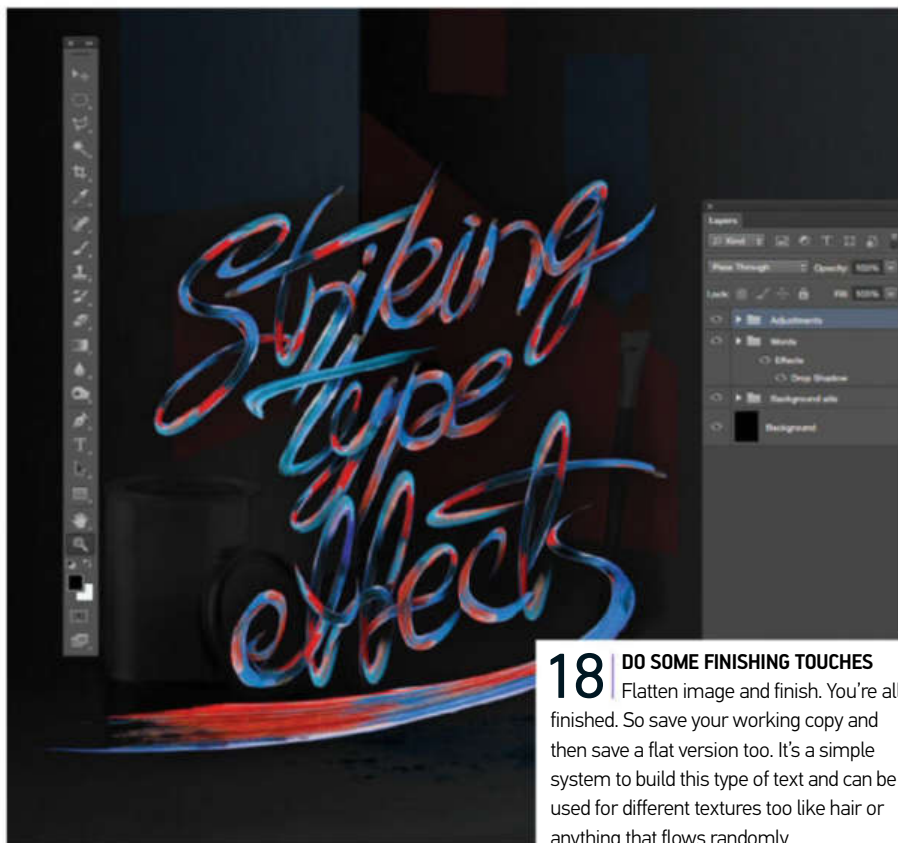
15 MAKE IT POP

Duplicate all type based elements and place them in a folder, now go to your Layer Options with the group selected and Select>Merge Group on the Layer palette menu. Then go to Filter>Sharpen and choose from Sharpen or Sharpen More. This will make the layer detail pop. If you go too far, reduce the opacity of this layer to find a good balance.



16 WORK ON THE FOUNDATIONS

Again duplicate all the text based elements as above and combine them in the same way. Now place this layer above the background and set the mode to Multiply and reduce your Opacity. Now using the Edit>Transform>Perspective and Scale tools shape this to look like it is sitting on the floor. You can make this matte by removing the colour or if your surface is reflective just keep the colour. If its looking a little too stuck on add a Gaussian Blur from the Filters menu.



18 DO SOME FINISHING TOUCHES

Flatten image and finish. You're all finished. So save your working copy and then save a flat version too. It's a simple system to build this type of text and can be used for different textures too like hair or anything that flows randomly.

QUICK TIP: SPEED IS POWER!

This technique can end up with a lot of layers, so if you have a choice of machines go with the best spec possible for Photoshop – the most RAM and fastest drives. The example

piece created for this tutorial only touches the surface of this technique. If this was a commercial piece it would have over ten times the layers and level of detail!

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PICKING FLOWERS

CHRISTINA ELLIS

DISCOVER HOW THIS DARK, BUT BEAUTIFUL PIECE INSPIRED BY UNICORNS WAS CREATED

Christina Ellis (skellopia.com) graduated in 2010 and worked at Moonbot Studios until 2015, now she's a freelance illustrator playing with children's books and indie comics. A passion for drawing and the mystical drives her creativity, she says, "I've been drawing since I could remember, surrounding myself with dinosaurs, dragons, and ghosts. I never really grew out of that, but luckily it worked to my advantage!"

"This is my version of a unicorn for a story I'm working on. I was playing with how unicorns are associated with virgins. This unicorn dislikes humans, but collects young girls, knowing that they can't make more humans if he keeps them young forever in the forest and loyal to his cause. He removes their hearts and replaces them with tree leaves. Scandinavian and Japanese folklore are an obvious influence, I like things that are dark, but still beautiful."

Ellis keeps her process quite simple, "there's a single brush preset that I'm addicted to. I don't use much beyond that brushwork in different layer modes. Layer masks and adjustment layers are a favourite of mine too... I draw straight onto the computer with a Cintiq, figuring out a lot of the details in black and white before adding colour with different layer modes. I paint on top of that too, making even more detail and colour decisions along the way."

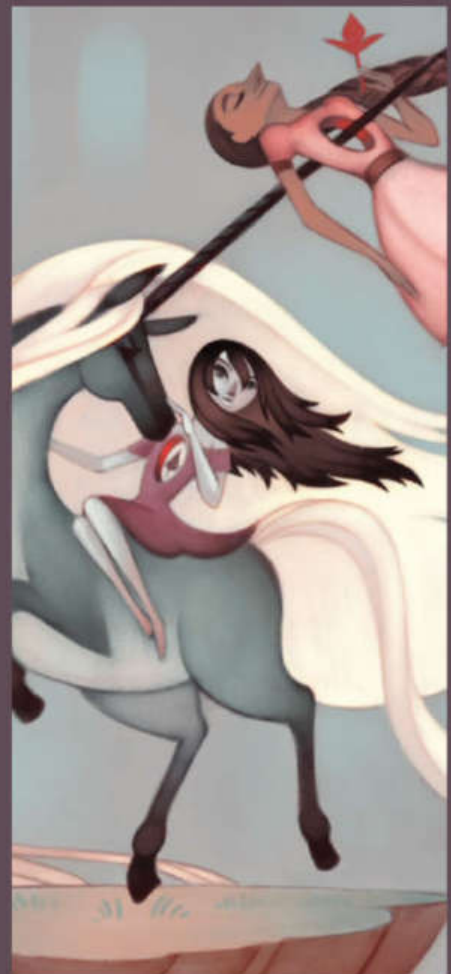


01 | BLACK-AND-WHITE SKETCH
Here I'm halfway through [a] black-and-white painting. I jump between big and small brush sizes, defining values and hard and soft edges along the way.

“Scandinavian and Japanese folklore are an obvious influence, I like things that are dark, but still beautiful”



02 | INTRODUCING COLOUR
I use layer modes to slowly introduce colour. I knock the contrast down so using Color Dodge and Burn doesn't oversaturate later, but general value relationships are well established.



03 | REFINING TO COMPLETION
I build up the colours until it looks done. I still make minor decisions (heart, background), but now I can colour with ease because I nailed down everything else.



COMBINE 3D AND PHOTOS

CREATE YOUR OWN CREATURE IN BLENDER AND INSERT IT INTO A PHOTO FOR A REALISTIC LOOK

Creating an image using one technique is easy once you have spent time and mastered it, whether it's a photo, 3D creation, or matte painting. However, it can be a real challenge when it comes to combining a few techniques together. When a piece of art is created using multiple and completely different techniques it can often look quite disjointed. It is very difficult to get a seamless and realistic look to the image.

This tutorial will teach you the basics of 3D modelling and texturing in Blender, and how to then insert your renders into a photo environment.

Combining 3D art and photos is a tricky task – it takes a lot of time to make photorealistic renders, so the render doesn't 'drop out' from the photo. Here you will learn a few tips to make it easier and faster.

You can use any version of Photoshop for this tutorial along with Blender. Blender is absolutely free, and much easier to learn, than other types of 3D software and the skills you get from this tutorial would be enough to make your own character. You can download the latest version of Blender for your system at www.blender.org.

After you have installed it, you are ready to start this tutorial and create your very own 3D!



OUR EXPERT

ALEKSEI PUSHILIN
www.be.net/plannit
 @plann_it

Aleksei Pushilin is a 26-year-old freelance game artist from Chelyabinsk, Russia. He loves every side of game developing – 3D and 2D assets, characters, environments and user interfaces. He also enjoys making maps and navigational systems in his spare time.

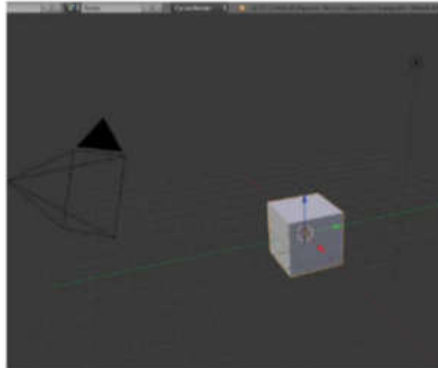


SOURCE FILES

You can find an image of the water pump on www.filesilo.co.uk/advancedphotoshop, you will also need photos of autumn leaves to complete this tutorial – make them yourself, or grab the ready-to-use images from FileSilo.

MODELLING THE CREATURE

CREATE AND RENDER THE MODEL

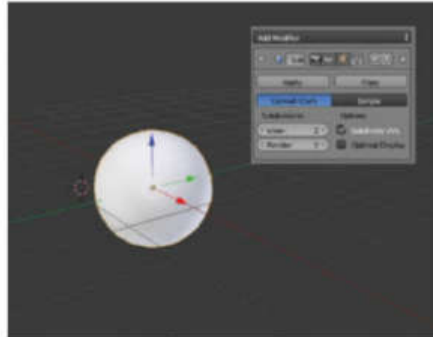


01 SET UP THE SCENE

First, launch Blender, and then adjust the render parameters: change the render type to Cycles at the top of the screen – it gives a much more beautiful result, then change the render resolution on the right to 1200x1500 pixels, and don't forget to set 100% in the window below. To reduce the noise, go to Sampling, and make at least 500 samples.

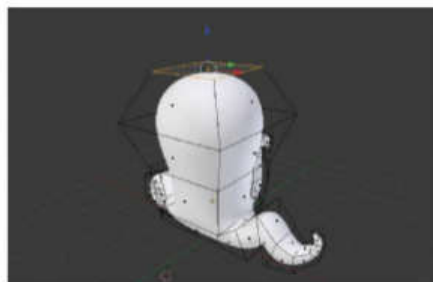
03 MODIFY THE BASE MESH AND MAKE TENTACLES

The buttons you will need are: G for Grab, S for Scale, R for Rotate, and E for Extrude. Switch to the Edit mode below. Change selection type to Face Select, select the top polygon of the cube, press E and grab the new border a bit higher. You will see how the form of the cube changes. Extruding the bottom polygons and making them smaller will help you to make curvy tentacles.



02 CREATE THE BASE MESH

You can use the cube in the centre of the scene. Select it with the right mouse button, change the shading to Soft on the left of the screen. Now the shading will be smoother than before. To make it even smoother, you will need to apply a modifier. Go to Modifiers inset in the right-hand toolbar, select Subdivision Surface and change the Subdivisions Parameter to 2 and 2. Now the cube is a sphere.



WORK IN PROGRESS

FROM BASIC FORM TO YOUR OWN CREATURE



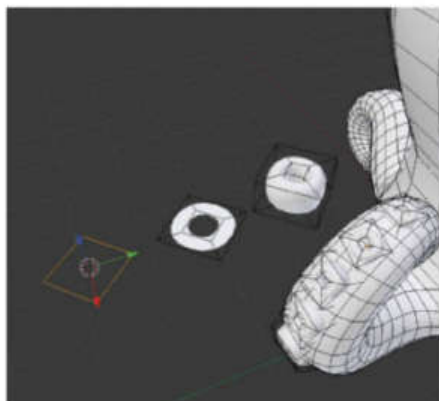
Progress 1: Create the basic form



Progress 2: Render the creature

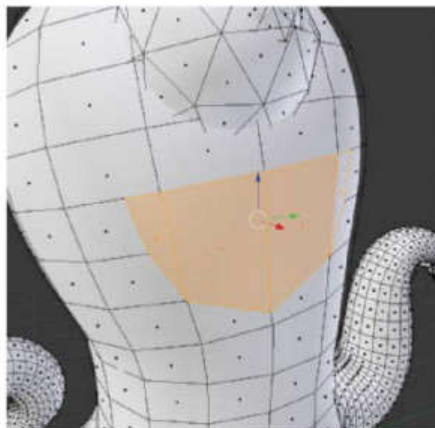


Progress 3: Insert the render



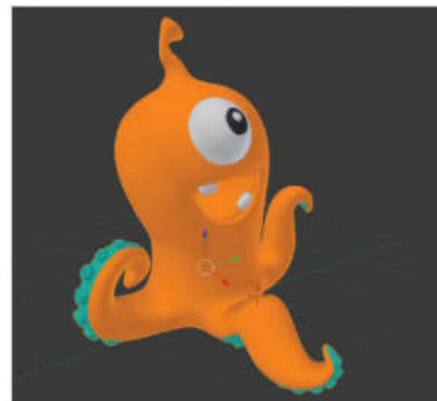
04 ADD DETAILS

Press Shift+A, select a circle, and change its sides to 4 on the bottom-left. Switch to the Edge selection below and select all the sides, then press E to extrude it and hit left mouse button immediately. Press S to resize the new polygon, and make it twice as big. This way you will get a ring. Switch to Face Select, select all faces of the ring and extrude it a bit higher. The sucker is ready, select it, duplicate with Shift+D, and using Grab, Scale and Rotate, place the suckers on the tentacles. It's a bit of a painstaking process, but with patience you will get the best results. Also create two spheres for the eye and pupil using Shift+A, and place them in the right position.



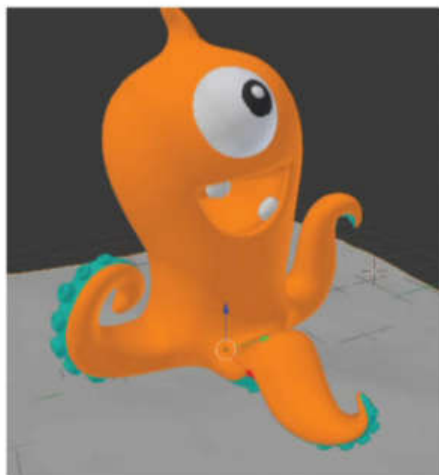
05 MAKE IT SMILE!

Now you should make your creature look cute – let it smile! Switch to Object mode below and press the Apply button at the Subdivision surface modifier, and switch to Edit mode again. You will see how the polygons have changed. Now press K – you will activate a Knife tool. Draw out a wide-open smile on the creature's head, after you've finished hit Enter to apply changes. Select all the polygons you've cut with Shift, and extrude it twice – first a little bit, and then more. You should get a deep, cute smile. To smooth it, apply modifier as in Step 2. Also create two cubes for teeth and place them in the mouth in Edit mode.



06 PAINT THE MODEL

Change the display mode below, from Solid to Material – so you can see the changes you make. Go to the Material inset on the right and choose New. You can change it to any colour by clicking the colour box. First, make an orange one – the whole model will now be in this colour. Then click + at the top – with this you will be able to create one more material. Make it green for the tentacles, select the polygons you want to paint in Edit mode, and click the Assign button. You can create as many materials as you want, like white for the eye and black for the pupil. If you want to select the whole object, like one of the suckers, select any part of it, and press Ctrl/Cmd+L.



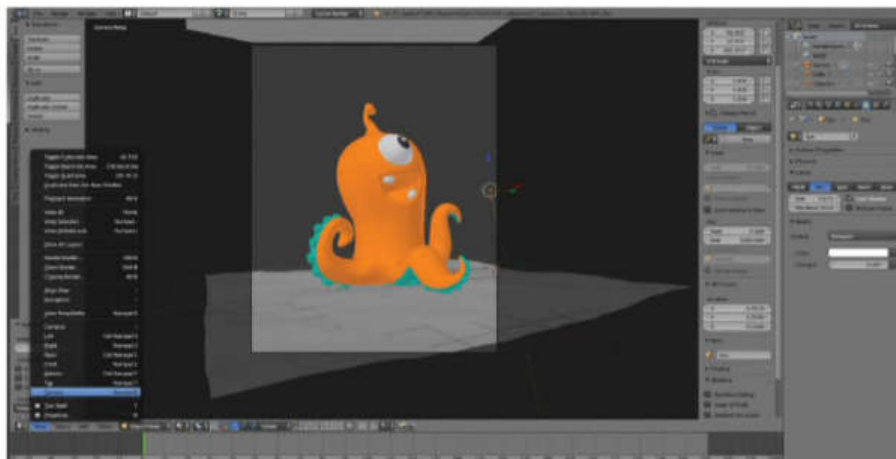
07 MAKE REFLECTIONS

As you are going to place the creature in a water puddle, there should be a physically true reflection, so you should create a water surface in Blender and render it. Switch to Object mode, press Shift+A>Mesh>Plane. Using Grab and Scale, place it under the creature. Now go to the Modifier inset and select the Ocean modifier – it will create waves on the plane. After applying the modifier the plane becomes much bigger – use Scale to make it smaller. To make the water glossy, and reflect light, add a new material as in Step 6, and change the surface above the colour box from Diffuse to Glossy.

■ QUICK TIP: MAKE YOUR GRAPHICS CARD DO THE RENDERING

If you've got an up to date powerful video card you can switch your render from your processor to it. To enable GPU rendering, go into the User Preferences in the Main Menu, and under System

tab, select the Compute Device to use. After this change CPU render to GPU in render inset. This way you can render multiple times faster than with your processor.



08 RENDER THE IMAGE

Switch to the Camera View at the bottom of the screen, select the camera border with the right mouse button, and using Grab and Rotate, place it the right way. Keep in mind the photo where you are going to place the render, so the perspective will be the same. The default light source in the scene is the Sun. Select it, go to object data at the right, and make

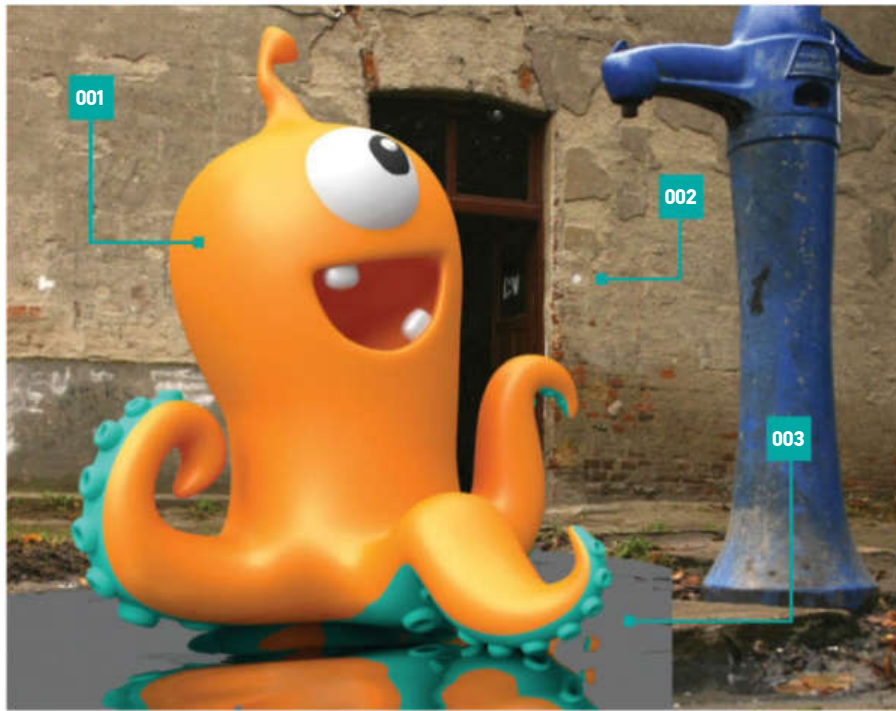
it brighter by adjusting the Strength parameter. Now press F12. You will see how your model is rendered in real time. Also, you can press Esc to abort the render, or reduce samples from Step 1 to make it faster. After you are finished, hit Image> Save As Image at the bottom left of the screen to save your render.

■ ADD THE PHOTO ENVIRONMENT

INSERT YOUR RENDER INTO THE PHOTO ENVIRONMENT

09 BACKGROUND IMAGE

Now you should launch Photoshop, and open the photo water_pump.jpg. After this, drag and drop your render on top of it and don't forget to resize it and place on the puddle. Then, using the Pen tool, carefully cut the creature from the background. Don't waste too much time on water though – you just need to cut the background to the water line, you will be able to clean it in the next few steps.



001 | CUT WITH PEN
The Pen tool is the best way to cut out the render – it is very flexible and you can undo moves if you need to

002 | DELETE THE BACKGROUND
After you've outlined the creature and water line, press the right mouse button, create new layer from selection, and delete background layer

003 | LOCATION
Delete the background and place the render carefully; the optimal position is the top of the puddle. You can reduce the opacity of the layer to see the backdrop



11 ADJUST THE REFLECTION

Cutting out such a complicated silhouette as the reflection of the render manually can be a real nightmare! Luckily there is an awesome tool called the Background Eraser tool. Pick it, make a radius of 50 pixels and carefully delete all the grey parts of the water. Small lines and different artefacts can appear in this process, you can use the eraser to clean them. After this, use the Pen tool to separate the reflection from the creature on a new layer. Using the Eraser tool with a large diameter and soft borders, make the edges of the reflection soft. Then go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur, and apply it with 2-3 pixel radius.



12 CUT OUT THE WATER PUMP

You will need a foreground environment, puddle, water pump and a small gap of ground and grass behind the puddle. Using the Pen tool cut out the water pump and a line of grass behind it. Don't be too careful with the grass – this part of the image is already behind the main object, the creature, so it is going to be blurred, or even replaced with another background. When you outline the water pump, keep in mind that it is better to make a line inside the object, 1-2 pixels in, so there are no borders of different colours when you separate the layers.



10 ADD MORE WATER

A bigger reflection is a great way to pull the photo and render together, but the puddle on the photo is too small for the creature's reflection. You can make it bigger using the Clone Stamp tool. You can hide the layer with the render by clicking the eye icon beside the layer, so it will not distract you from the background image. Pick the Clone Stamp tool, use Alt/Option and the left mouse button to pick up the source for the cloning. The best point to pick is the open door line in the reflection – you should continue this line down. Don't forget to avoid small details when cloning, like bubbles on the water, or chalk letters in the reflection.

“To make a focal point effect, like on a real photo, you should blur the background”



13 ADD BACKGROUND

Now you should add a new background to the image. Open background.jpg from FileSilo and place it in a new layer, behind the layer with the creature and water pump, but under all other layers, and make it a bit bigger. To make a focal point effect, like on a real photo, you should blur the background, and keep the creature sharp. Go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur, and apply it with a 10-15 pixel radius. As you can see, there is a lot of green on this image, so go to the Image>Correction>Photo Filter and apply a warm tone to the background.

GATHER ALL PARTS TOGETHER

ADD THE FOREGROUND ENVIRONMENT AND ADJUST LIGHT AND COLOUR

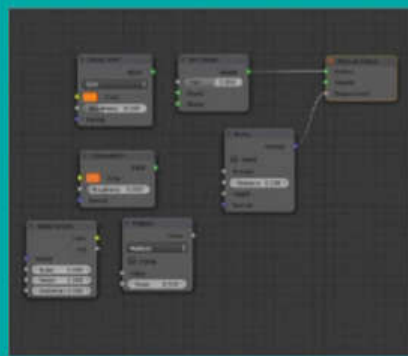


14 FOREGROUND ENVIRONMENT

After you enlarge the puddle, there is a rough, ugly gap that you should replace. To get a nice, warm autumn feeling from the image, and to fill the gap, you can add autumn leaves to the front of the image. Take front_leaves.jpg from FileSilo and put it on the top layer. You can shrink the image vertically a little to fit the perspective of the scene better. Then, use the Eraser tool and Background Eraser tool to clear the grass line. Use Gaussian Blur to make a focus effect, and apply a photo filter as in Step 13.

■ QUICK TIP: IMPROVE COMPOSITES BY BLURRING LAYER EDGES

To polish the final scene, use the Blur tool on the edges of every layer – this helps a lot to combine all layers into one complex image, reducing the chance of a collage look. You can even blur whole parts of objects to add to the depth of field.



■ ADVANCED MATERIALS AND TEXTURES

When trying to achieve photorealistic renders, explore advanced materials and textures in Blender. This is a very complicated part of 3D modelling, and needs a lot of time spent on it, but the results are totally worth it. In Cycles render, there is a Node system. By using this you can acquire many types of realistic looking materials like wood, plastic, metal, or even skin and organic materials. The more photorealistic your renders are, the less time you will spend trying to combine 3D renders and 2D photos. You can get a lot of information and tutorials about this system on www.blenderguru.com.

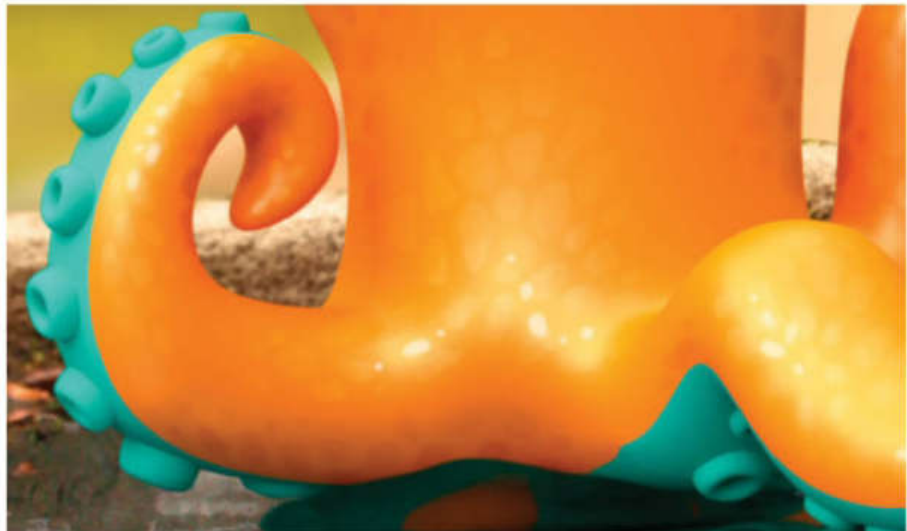


15 ADD FINAL DETAILS

To add some eye-catching details, you should insert some nice looking autumn leaves on the puddle surface. Open leaves.jpg from FileSilo, and use the Pen tool to cut them out and add on a new layer under the puddle. Also you can add some to the foreground environment, but don't forget to blur them. To make it look real, you should add shadows to the water surface. Add a new layer, change the blend mode to Multiply, and using a warm coloured brush with soft edges, paint the shadows under every leaf.

17 ADD LIGHT AND A BACKGROUND BORDER

To adjust the colour and light of the scene, create two new layers under all the others. Switch the blend mode of the first layer to Hard Light, and using the Gradient tool, paint an orange gradient from the top of the scene. Then switch the blend mode of the second layer to Screen, and paint a light blue gradient from the top. After this, open border.jpg from FileSilo and insert a stone border to hide the gap beside the creature – don't forget to blur it!



18 HAND PAINTED SKIN TEXTURE

The last thing you should do is make the creature look more realistic, rather than just a 3D render. To achieve this goal, paint the texture of the skin on top of the render. Create a new layer, switch blend mode to Soft Light, grab a white brush at 15%



16 CREATE A WATER DROP

Composition is very important for every image, and to make it logical and finished, you should add a point where the creature is looking. To make a water drop, take background.jpg and place it on a new layer. Make it very small, and using the Pen tool, cut out the form of a water drop. Then, using a white brush set to Soft Light, add some highlights to the left side of the drop. After this, switch to a dark brush set to Multiply, and add shadow to the right side. Finally, take the colour of the creature using the Eyedropper, and with a brush set to Hard Light, paint a reflection from the creature into the drop.



Opacity, and paint small patches of reflected light on the bright parts of the creature. Then create one more layer, switch it to Multiply, and paint shadows on the dark parts of the creature. After that you can add a few very bright spots of reflected light.



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VICTORIAN GOTHIC

ANDY WALSH

DIGITAL PAINTER ANDY WALSH TALKS ABOUT CREATING MOOD AND AVOIDING DETAIL IN VICTORIAN GOTHIC

Although he is also an accomplished 3D artist, Andy Walsh (www.sonarfates.com) says he has come to regard 3D as a crutch. "I decided to do a street scene that was more painterly," he says, because "3D can look very digital and fake." His work often explores the dark and the gothic, so the Victorian setting was easy to choose. "I've always loved that

kind of moody historical setting," he explains. "The Victorian era is one of my favourites, it's so gritty and there's this mixture of architecture and organic, warping materials. The architecture was alive back then."

To create the painterly feel he used a lot of custom brushes to paint over the photographic elements. "I also tend to Smart Blur photos all the

time to reduce their detail down," he says. "I don't like detail and I'm still working on getting detail out of my piece. A famous artist (I forget who) recently said that people often think it's a compliment to say 'wow, your piece is so detailed,' but as a fundamental principle of good painting, detail needs to be implied. Most of the time anyway..."



01 | A NEW/OLD START

Before I start I spend a lot of time gathering reference. For this piece I wanted to move away from using 3D models (which I had been using previously) and go for a more loose and painterly finish. I found a royalty-free image to base the composition on.



02 | TONE DOWN DISTRACTIONS

I used a combination of Levels adjustments, Desaturation and also a Smart Blur to get the feel of the buildings down into a narrow muddy value range. We don't want detail (or people) to stand out at this stage and distract our eye. I also painted loosely over the top to further simplify and further reduce contrast. I added a new road that has more texture and some puddles to give a damp feel.



03 | FORCE TO FIT

When you're putting other architectural pieces into your image, they don't have to fit your perspective perfectly, you can get away with quite a lot of distorting and skewing to force them to conform to your perspective grid. I always place vanishing points in a piece like this so that any additional images I add will adhere to a consistent perspective.

04 | BRING ON THE NIGHT

I added three adjustment layers on top of the piece; a Levels just to further reduce contrast, a layer filled with blue and set to Hard Light and a Hue/Saturation adjustment just to take down the overall saturation. I stretched the mansion quite considerably and the result was that it looked really spiky and gothic. The light in the doorway was just an experiment to see how warm light could affect the scene.



05 | PAINT OVER THE PIECES

I started to 'destroy' the photos to make way for the painterly finish. It's important to not rely too much on the photographic base when you want to make a digital painting, especially where architecture is concerned. For atmosphere, I added dense smoke and fog using custom brushes and some distant lights. The addition of chimneys adds a reason for the smoke as well as nice silhouettes.



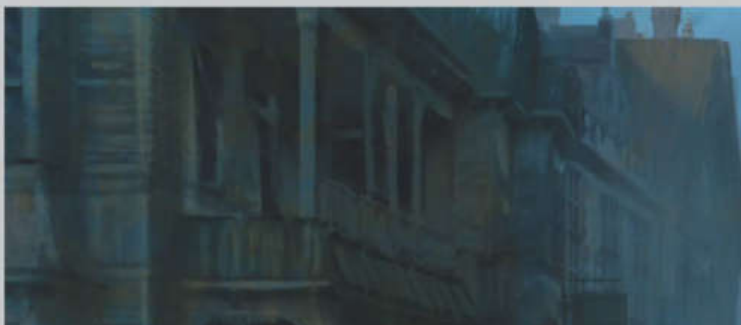
06 | ARCHITECTURAL ADJUSTMENTS

I found an image of an old house and placed it on the corner. The perspective was totally out so I had to hack it up and skew the front face and the side face separately, then paint over the left-over holes and gaps. Then I started to add paint to the rest of the street so I could add the details back in a more painterly fashion.



07 | BRINGING THE DETAIL BACK

This stage was all about painting in the details by hand and being careful about where the eye is getting drawn. It's often about experimenting, putting something in, stepping back, seeing if it works. In Step 6 things looked messy but here, the overall direction of verticals and perspective lines are reinforced to add a bit more order.



A 3D BASE

ALTHOUGH IT HAS A SIMILAR DARK AND COMPELLING TONE, THIS IMAGE OF ANDY WALSH'S WAS CREATED IN A DIFFERENT WAY

To create this piece and explore the 1980s cinematography of the horror movie, Walsh created a basic street in 3ds Max. "The render was very simple with almost no textures," he says, "There's also 3D cars placed in. After that it was all down to Photoshop – putting in dozens of texture overlays as well as adjustment layers to bring out the mood and atmosphere."



"The cinema and video rental names are taken from actual places from my home town that existed in the Nineteen-eighties," says Walsh

08 | LIGHT IT UP

I brought the street to life with lights and people. It's a good idea to make them seem like they're not just placed in, but are part of some kind of motion or mini story. It may not be apparent at first, but there's a guy looking up at the candle-lit lady on the balcony, and the running figure to help pull us through the street. Finally I adjusted the contrast of the overall image and added a layer of noise just to make it look a little grainy and film-like.



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15 INSIDER SECRETS FOR INDUSTRY SUCCESS

IT CAN BE HARD TO BREAK INTO THE CREATIVE INDUSTRY AND TURN IT INTO YOUR CAREER. HERE WE LOOK AT THE SECRETS OF SUCCESS WITH INSPIRING ADVICE FROM PROS WORKING IN ALL DIFFERENT DISCIPLINES



© Nikita Gill 2015

01. HOW TO APPROACH A CLIENT BRIEF

When you are first starting out in the creative industry, one of the things that you need to learn, quickly, is how to approach a brief, work with a client and deliver the work that is to the right standard, but meeting all of the requirements initially set up. Graphic designer and digital artist Nikita Gill (www.nikitagill.co.uk) talks us through her best practice.

"When I am working with a new client, I usually ask to speak to them over the phone or on Skype so I can get an idea of what they need, because emails can be quite impersonal.

"I always ask my clients the following questions: What are three keywords you would use to define your brand? What colours do you see your brand in? What is your target audience?

What is the brand's story? After this, I send my clients four different types of logo in a single presentation file using the information they have given me, as well as the information I have gleaned from my discussion with them. After this, we take it forward depending on what the client likes from the logo set.

"If you're a new designer, I strongly recommend that you always organise a meeting with your client where you either video conference them or speak over the phone or, better yet, meet them with your sketchpad. Set terms down with the client at the first meeting so you are both clear on the process. Develop a strong relationship so you can have an ongoing interaction even after the completed product has been received."

02. THE PROS AND CONS OF FREELANCING

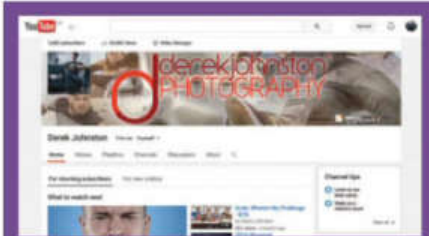
When it comes to deciding whether you want to go it alone, or take a studio job, you need to look at both the advances and disadvantages to make the right decision, as freelance illustrator Ben White (www.behance.net/nvlnvl) explains: "I have a really hard time staying focused. I constantly get distracted with new ideas or indulging in personal projects, and so have had to develop some self-discipline that isn't really innate. The other thing is being comfortable with those bumps in the road, going from low amounts of work incoming to suddenly being swamped. Freelancing can feel very rewarding, in terms of having a certain level of autonomy and the satisfaction of having entirely overseen a project, but it can also be extremely demanding and spill too much into time that should be for recharging your focus. If you can be flexible and adapt quickly [freelancing] will give you an amount of control, but if you value stability, working in a studio might feel better."

© Ben White 2015

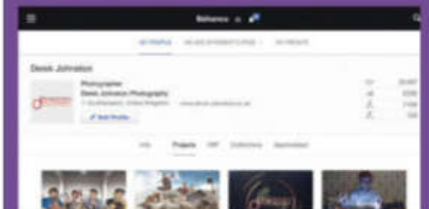


03. GET YOUR WORK NOTICED

PHOTOSHOP EXPERT DEREK JOHNSTON (WWW.DEREK-JOHNSTON.CO.UK) EXPLAINS HIS TOP FOUR TIPS FOR BECOMING A SUCCESS IN HIS INDUSTRY



Use YouTube: "Get on and create a YouTube channel. Provide quick tips, little tricks, behind-the-scenes videos and even full-length tutorials. You don't even need much equipment. Most DSLRs have great HD video capabilities and so do most smartphones. They're decent enough to get you started. I use an app called iTalk on my phone to capture my voice via mic input and Screenflow app to capture my screen. Keep your videos interesting, fun, educational and make your viewers want to subscribe and come back for more."



Be on Behance: "I suggest you check it out Behance; it's a great way to showcase your work and discover some amazing other talent from all over the globe and even in your own city. I've personally met and discovered a lot of other creative individuals on there, and also had some client work from this website. It's fantastic and is a great way to show off your talents [or] skills, which could lead to other teams or creatives wanting to work with you."



Have a Facebook profile: "The dreaded Facebook. But in all seriousness it is still a great tool for getting and talking to potential clients. Whether you love it or hate it, the fact remains that everyone uses it. Just remember to be professional. Your online presence is essential on there. Use it strictly for your profession. Don't complain or moan. Never talk about clients, no matter how bad. Keep political views to yourself and definitely don't get into an argument."



Build a personal website: "Last, but certainly not least; this should be your absolute number one. This is your chance to say to everyone, 'Hey, this is me and this is my bit of the internet'. Make sure you've got really clear information that flows from one page to the next. Don't make it difficult for users to navigate or find information. Have a great Info and About page, with a picture of yourself. People need to know who you are and how to get hold of you."



04. STAND OUT ON BEHANCE

BEHANCE IS A REALLY GREAT PLATFORM FOR SHOWCASING YOUR WORK FOR THE ONLINE WORLD TO SEE AND MORE IMPORTANTLY, PLENTY OF POTENTIAL CLIENTS USE IT TO FIND TALENT. WE LOOK AT AN EXAMPLE OF A GOOD PROFILE, SHOWCASING ARTIST BILLY BOGIATZOGLU ([WWW.BEHANCE.NET/BILLELIS](http://www.behance.net/billelis))

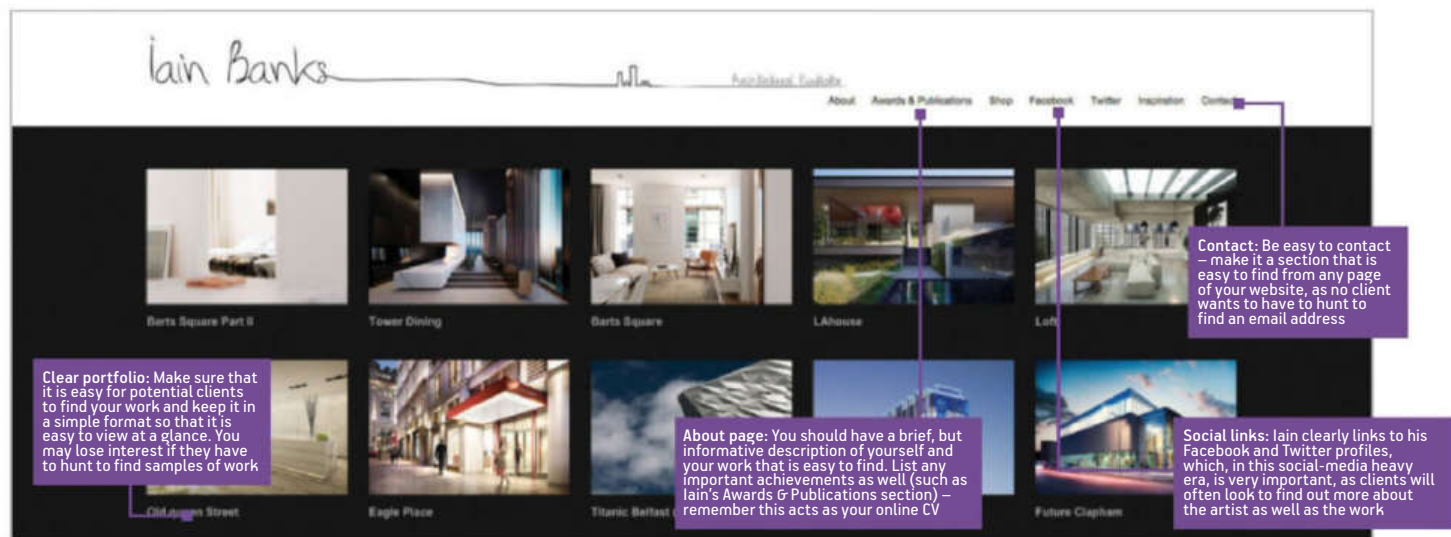
05. PRO TIPS TO HELP GET YOUR FIRST CREATIVE JOB

If you're looking for your first job in the industry, then graphic designer Chris Homer (www.chrishomer.net) has some pearls of wisdom to share: "I would say having a lot of work experience is key. Leaving university I had experience in quite diverse fields. As well as getting me a job, it highlighted very quickly what my strengths were.

"Going into the first job it is important to consider that you are far from the finished article. As well as getting good jobs, it's more important to learn from the people around you. This can be creative and technical, but also how to successfully work with others. For example, in my first job I learnt how to choose the simplest path to a solution because of limited time. To this day I always start ideas quite fast to realise them in order to keep the client assured that the project is on time."



© Chris Homer



06. CREATE A STRONG WEB PRESENCE

Having a good website is essential, so that potential clients can find out more about you, view your work and have confidence that you can deliver what they need.

Architectural visualiser Iain Banks has a simple, but inspiring website at www.iainbanks.com, and he has some invaluable advice to aspiring artists: "I first put my website together at university to upload portfolio pieces. Back then it was all HTML code and specialist software such as Dreamweaver, which was very good, but almost needed a degree in itself to master. Nowadays, however, there is an abundant array of

online portfolio management services such as Cargo Collective, Square Space and Wordpress. All of these allow you to create a website in minutes and host your artwork online with streamlined templates that can be easily edited to personal preferences.

"Young digital artists should look out for these platforms and begin with the basic free option. From there, once you need a bit more gallery space as your portfolio increases in size, you should consider upgrading to a paid account. Next, you should consider spreading your work onto other blogs and social

media, such as Facebook, Twitter and Adobe's Behance network, which is particularly useful. This is a great platform to show off your work as well as comment and follow the work of fellow industry professionals.

"I chose to go with Cargo Collective and have kept the layout of my website very simple to aid navigation. New artists should consider carefully what to show on their site, focusing on only uploading your best work and then spreading it as much as possible to get maximum exposure."



07. ENGAGE POTENTIAL CLIENTS WITH A BLOG

Adding a blog to your website can add interest and personality, as well as attract those all-important clients, as photographer Derek Johnston (www.derek-johnston.co.uk/blog) explains: "People love reading about you and finding out about you. It brings you closer onto a more personal level and makes you a real person to them. I have a lot of returning visitors. My blog is something that I really enjoy doing too. I do a lot of 'How I made this

image' type posts; it's nice for potential clients to see how my work is created. After all, those are the people who will most likely be in the photo, so having them understand how it all works is essential. You want them to arrive at the shoot knowing what's going on and just enjoy it, not standing around against a plain backdrop looking confused with lights flashing around them. It'll pay you hugely in the outcome of the final piece."



© Mélanie Delon

08. PURSUE PERSONAL PROJECTS

It is important that you keep doing personal projects, as well as commercial work if you want to become a success in your industry – it is the best way to develop your skills and build your portfolio. This is something that works for graphic designer and digital artist Nikita Gill (www.nikitagill.co.uk): “The most important thing as a creative is to keep yourself inspired. This is imperative to the way you create both on a professional level, as well as a personal level. Creating for fun purposes, or just because you feel inspired, is how you keep your ideas fresh, new and prevent your skill set from getting rusty, and add more to your quiver of metaphorical arrows of creativity. A lot of the skills I have acquired were from experimenting with colours and ideas in software just because I liked the idea. Implementing them in client work was then easy.”

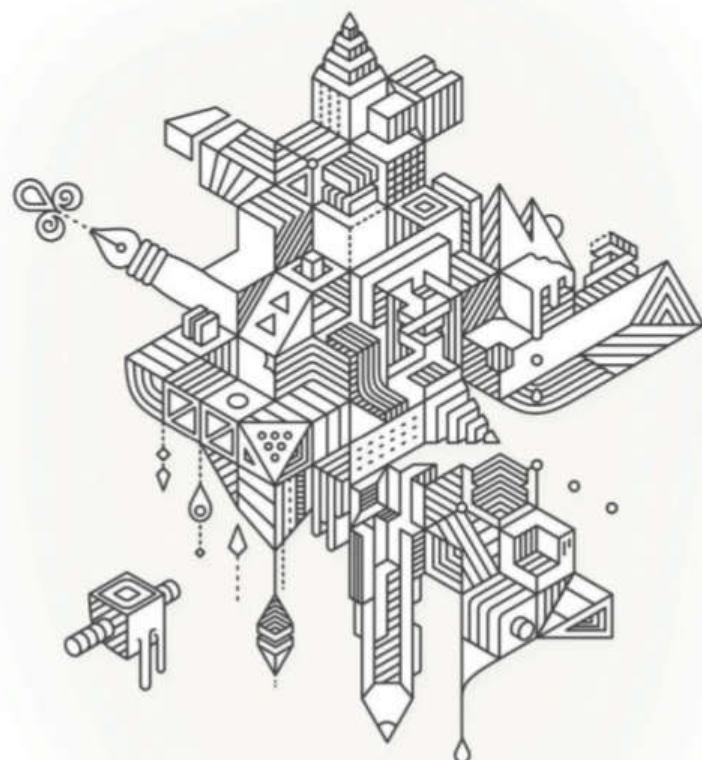


© Nikita Gill 2013

09. CHOOSE AND WORK WITH THE RIGHT AGENT

You don't have to have an agent to make a success of yourself within the industry, but it is something that could be worth considering, especially as you build up a strong client portfolio. Mélanie Delon (www.melanieadelon.com) talks about the benefits of having an agent (she uses one for Europe and one for North America): “I don't think this is essential; you can find contracts and clients without an agent. This implies additional work – agencies generally have a large address book and it's quite long and difficult to build it alone – but it's possible!

“The positive thing is to work as a team; as a freelancer you're often alone behind your computer, so having an agency can break this solitude. They also facilitate dialogue with the customer, knowing exactly what they want. Some contracts are not easy to achieve and the agency provides support and advice. Finding a good agency is not [an] easy task; some offer exclusive contracts where it is no longer possible to accept your own contracts, and some others are more flexible. I would say that it is better to choose one where there are not too many artists, as these agencies have more time to give to each illustrator. The main thing is to feel good about it and develop a great relationship [and] teamwork.”



HABITATS

© Ben White 2015

10. SELL MERCHANDISE

There is an array of websites that are aimed at giving designers the chance to sell their designs as t-shirts, without having to source the products or deal with the sales procedure. This can be a good way to make a little extra money from your personal work.

Freelance illustrator Ben White has a store through the popular Design by Humans (www.designbyhumans.com/shop/nvlnvl/): “These sites are really a massive win for artists and designers, offering a way to both showcase your work and sell a range of products without the complexity and overheads. If you have work suitable to these products and a little time to spare, there aren't really any reasons to not set up a profile and potentially earn some extra money.” However, there are so many designers and products that you are not guaranteed to make money, so it's best to be aware before jumping in.

“There are no assumptions for success. There are a couple of sites where I have maybe ten designs, but the overwhelming majority of sales come from one or two. These got picked up on somewhere like Tumblr or Pinterest and I think there is an element of luck in that, which you can't engineer! There are people who can very successfully promote and market their products for online stores, and if you're looking to generate a serious revenue stream then investing some time in promotion (and networking) is going to be essential to making it happen. Keep your designs up to date and make sure you add new products when the sites make them available to maximise your sales too.”



© Lois van Baarle

11. FUND A PROJECT ON KICKSTARTER

Kickstarter is one of the best-known crowd-funding websites. Some artists have been using it as a way to generate money to publish or produce personal projects. For example, Lois van Baarle (www.loish.net) has recently used the site to fund an artbook of her work, which was a huge success, being 100 per cent funded within two hours and smashing her original target. She talks us through why she used Kickstarter: "I've been planning on making an artbook for years and spent a lot of time researching. A lot of artists self publish, which is a

great idea, but requires a massive investment up front. That's why I chose Kickstarter – it enables you to set a minimum amount needed for your project to be successful. If you don't meet your minimum, you know it's not worthwhile to pursue.

"There's no way to guarantee success, but it helps to generate a lot of exposure through social networks. In my case, it also helps to be able to give my backers something that they can't get anywhere else. This is the first book that will feature this much background information, insight and tips into what I do. It's [also]

really important to put time and effort into the campaign, not only by making a nice movie and some appealing graphics, but by taking the time to talk to all the backers personally and answering questions.

"I recommend Kickstarter to creatives who are extremely motivated and willing to put in lots of time and effort to make their project come to life. It's not easy money by any means, considering all the hours and effort that go in, as well as the structured financial plan you have to set up before starting, but it can be the boost you need to make your project happen."



© Chris Homer

12. DESIGN ARTWORK PRINTS

As well as t-shirts, another popular way to sell your artwork is as prints. Chris Homer (www.chrishomer.net) says that each designer will find the route that's right for them: "It's important to print the style you have been doing for a long time. Setting up relationships with shops might be hard if one piece is not recognisable as yours from the next.

"The next [consideration] is the right medium to print with. I do silk-screen prints, but at the same time know a lot of successful illustrators who will make giclee prints of their work. This leads onto edition sizes. Printing a load in one go might not be the best way, as you can't be guaranteed what will sell. I generally aim for 20 each time.

"Having a mix of both physical galleries and online shops [myself], both have their advantages. I have found some work, which includes photography, sells more in physical galleries, whereas my graphic work will sell more online."



© Rob Fenech

13. REMEMBER YOU'RE RUNNING A BUSINESS

Rob Fenech (www.robfeench.co.uk) shares the secrets behind becoming a successful freelance web designer: "The key is to be great at what you do. That usually means not splitting your focus. Have a small team around you who specialise in certain things. For instance, you may be a great designer and even a fantastic developer, but you may not have the strongest copywriting skills, or you may struggle with conceptualising logos for instance. Never promise something that you can't

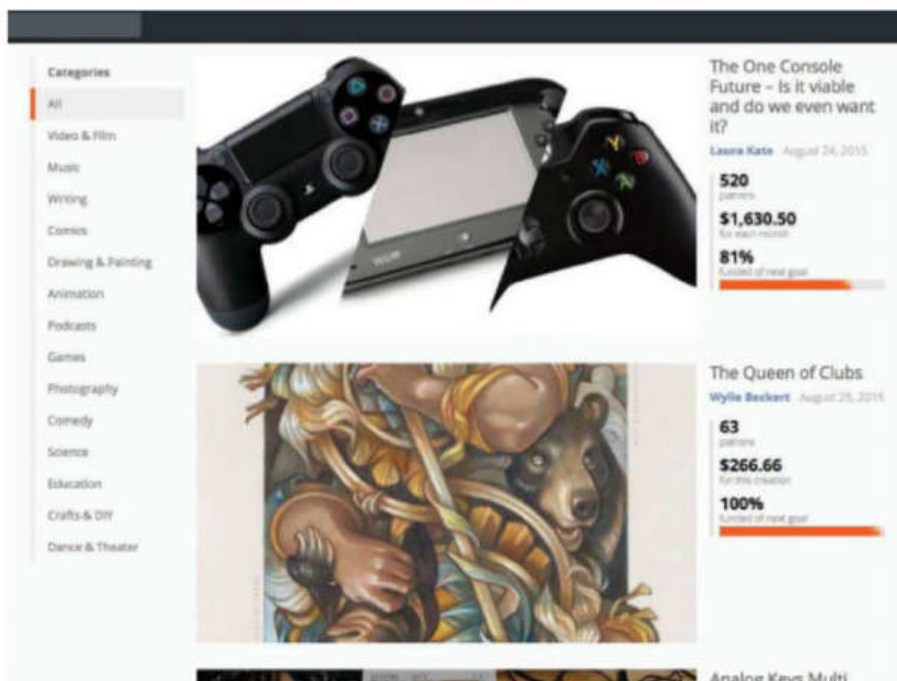
do very well, unless you know you have the resources to call upon.

"On top of the design and development, you're also running a business. You're better off taking one job for £1,000, than five jobs for £200 each. You have to value your own time and skill.

"Get yourself a good accountant and some good time-management software. You need a way to manage your time efficiently, and also to keep track of what hours you've spent on which client. That way you can bill accurately and fairly.

"Being a freelance web designer isn't easy. Building a website can be easy, but doing it the right way rarely is. The one thing people forget is the strategy. You aren't just creating a cookie-cutter template website for a faceless company; you are crafting the online face of a business you believe in.

"If you want to become a great freelance web designer, then you have to think about the end result. What is the objective of this site? Is it to sell stuff? Raise the profile of the company? Engage with customers and elicit more calls? Whatever the objective, it is your responsibility to ensure you deliver a return on investment."

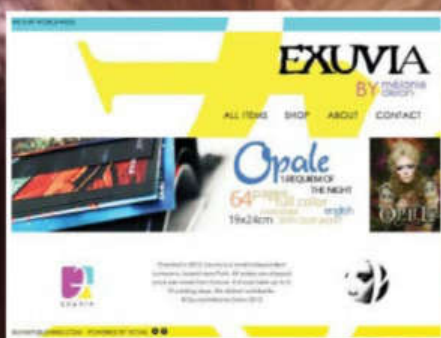


14. OFFER EXTRAS ON PATREON

Patreon is a new way that creatives can earn money to produce their work. It covers all key creative genres and differs from crowd-funding sites like Kickstarter.

Rather than asking for funding for a single project, or ask for people to become patrons of creatives, giving regular donations (paid per finished artwork published) to fund their continuing work. In return, they get access to things like early sketches, tutorials and discounted [or] free products. Taryn Arnold,

Community Happiness and Social for Patreon, says: "Honestly, I'm trying to help creators be able to quit their day job. Our mission as a team is to get creators paid for their unbelievable talent. We now have over 20,000 financially active creators on Patreon, many who have these diehard fans that would do anything to support their work. The relationship between creator and patron is without a doubt the most stellar thing to watch grow – they're essentially just giving back to one another. It's a rad thing to be a part of."



15. DIVERSIFY YOUR INCOME

You don't have to rely on external websites to deliver what you need – you can step into online sales and publishing yourself to generate more money. Mélanie Delon (www.melaniedelon.com) started a small publishing outlet/online shop three years ago as a way of selling products featuring her

work at www.exuviapublishing.com. "I needed to be able to publish my own derivative products like postcards, posters and such. It's really exciting to create, design and promote your own book or calendar. It's a long process and I have to learn different jobs, but it's really interesting and fun to do" she explains.

"I think it is important to have personal projects, like a little shop, personal artbook or even workshops. It doesn't pay the bills, but it helps and it's refreshing! With this kind of small revenue, I can choose and be more selective with clients and commissions. This is really nice, because I can focus on the subjects I really like."

© Mélanie Delon



© Monika Rogalska

AJGIEL



NATURE AND TECHNOLOGY

MONIKA ROGALIŃSKA

THIS YOUNG ARTIST STUDIES TRADITIONAL ART, BUT IS TEACHING HERSELF TO PRODUCE HIGH-CALIBRE DIGITAL WORK LIKE THIS

Monika Rogalińska ([ajgie1.deviantart.com](https://www.deviantart.com/ajgie1)) is an 18-year-old high school student from Poland. "Drawing was always my hobby and I [have been] doing it since I was little kid," she explains. "I'm mostly self-taught in digital painting. I [go] to an art school, but they teach us only a very traditional approach to

art, so I have to make my digital paintings on my own. I make them just for my own enjoyment now, but I hope one day I'll be able to do it as a job."

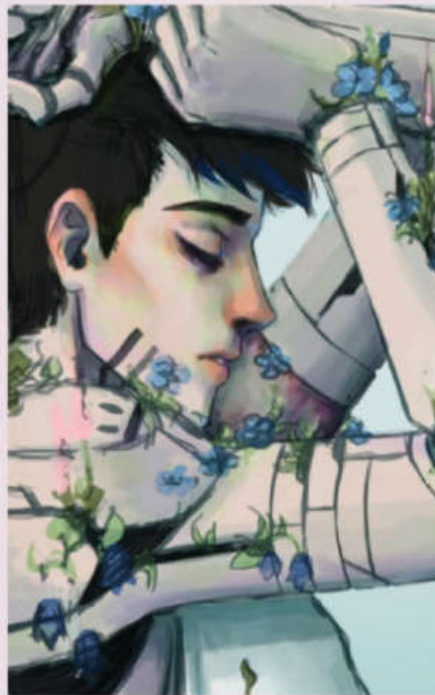
Nature And Technology is one of the pieces that she has made for her own personal practice, and even at such a young age it shows the fantastic quality of her work. "I was inspired by the album

Biophilia by Björk," she says. "It's electronic music, but the lyrics are about nature. I was also inspired by how plants grow on old cars, TVs and stuff like that. Technology and nature are two opposite things that destroy each other, and together they make contrast. I like to put two opposites on one canvas and make them work together."



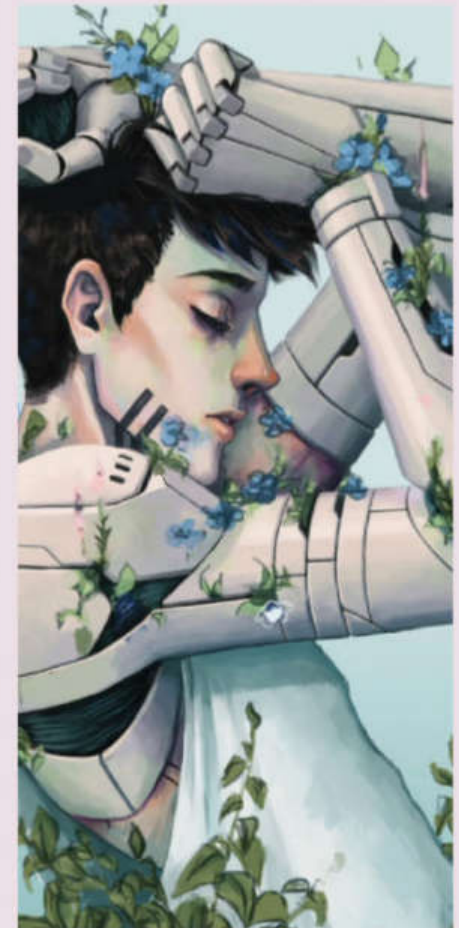
01 ROUGH SKETCH AND BASE COLOURS

First I made rough sketch of the composition, coloured it blue and switched the layer mode to Multiply, then I chose base colours. I don't make line art from my sketches, I switch them to Multiply and make the layer around 70% Opacity, then I paint base colours under it.



02 CUSTOM BRUSHES AND SHADING

I used custom brushes made by other Deviantart members: Mezamero ([mezamero.deviantart.com](https://www.deviantart.com/mezamero)) and Pheberoni ([pheberoni.deviantart.com](https://www.deviantart.com/pheberoni)) and a photo of my own hand for reference. I made a new layer in Multiply mode and I use cold tones for it. I blend it with white colour using a brush. I was using the Brush and Eraser tools mostly, a bit of a Blur and the Gradient tool as well.



03 OVERPAINTING

The most time-consuming step! I created a new layer and used the Color Picker tool and the Brush tool at 80% Opacity and made everything smooth, and corrected mistakes. I also used the Lighting filter at the end.

“Technology and nature are two opposite things that destroy each other... I like to put two opposites on one canvas and make them work together”



High-end performer: The BenQ SW2700PT is a good value choice for home studios, combining high performance with a bargain price when compared to other monitors of its calibre

BENQ SW2700PT MONITOR

BENQ'S LATEST OFFERING IS DESIGNED SPECIFICALLY FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS, SO WHAT ARE THE UNIQUE FEATURES THAT MAKE IT STAND OUT?

www.benq.com

SPECIFICATIONS:

• Windows, Mac, Linux

£535

\$645

This wide-format, 27-inch monitor from BenQ is designed primarily with photographers in mind, as evinced by its ability to display 99% of the Adobe RGB colour space. It's aimed squarely at those who want accurate reproduction of the colours they've captured in-camera, so for photographers and retouchers the snappily named SW2700PT could well be a challenger to the traditional high-quality Mac monitor.

The SW2700PT's advanced colour functionality, while aimed squarely at photographers by the manufacturers, would also be a boon for many other imaging professionals working in still, 2D imagery. The 2560x1440 QHD resolution (at 109 pixels per inch) is perfect for working on all kinds

of images – photos, composites, graphic design – although given the monitor's focus on this area, it's less appropriate for general all-round use. This isn't an all-round monitor for doing some Photoshop work on, streaming Netflix and playing videogames, but then, it's not designed to be. It's compatible with both Macs and PCs, so for those already running a desktop machine – or even a laptop – this would make an excellent photo-editing focused second monitor, or even a primary one if you run a dedicated imaging computer just for your Photoshop work and you're in the market for a replacement screen. At 27 inches in size it's big enough for both zoomed-out and fine detail work, but not so large that it dominates your desk like some of the 4K behemoths out there.



Portrait format: You can rotate the screen to a portrait view for full creative control over taller images



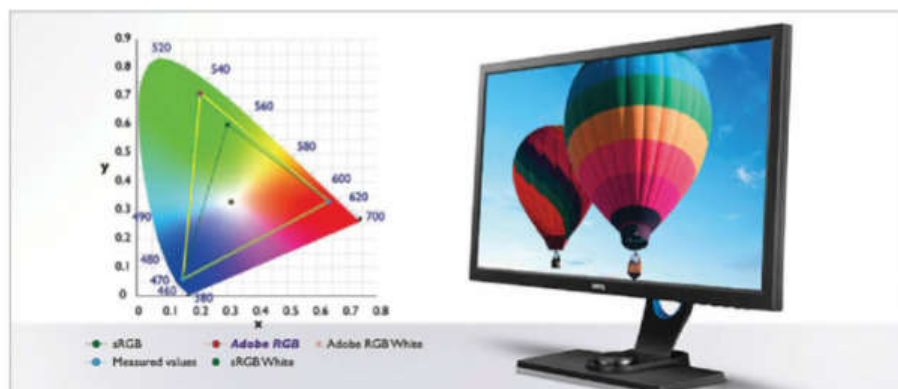
Solid foundation: Despite how easy it is to raise, lower and rotate, the base of the monitor provides a solid foundation with very little wobble when you're moving it around



ADJUSTABLE HEIGHT AND ANGLES

The BenQ SW2700PT is a highly mobile monitor that can be lifted up to 13cm above its base profile. It offers a downward tilt of 3.5 degrees and an upward of 20, can pivot 35 degrees to either side, and it can even be rotated to the angle you want, up to a full 90

degrees into portrait mode when turned anti-clockwise. Despite this its stand is solid, and comes with a handy ruler on the back so that you know the exact height you've set it up at – useful if you like your working environment to be just so.



PALETTE MASTER ELEMENT

This software, which you can download for free from the BenQ website, works in conjunction with compatible colour calibrators to help maintain colour accuracy. With the monitor offering 10-bit colour depth and a typical contrast ratio of 1000:1, its 14-bit LUT ensures that your monitor stays on its colour target. With a Delta-E that typically comes in under two, it is capable of going slightly off-colour without regular calibration. Palette Master Element

offers both Basic and Advanced modes, so you can do a quick seven-minute check every so often (every couple of weeks is advisable if you're working intensively on images) or a more intensive recalibration if your Basic check flags any potential colour issues. With 99% of Adobe RGB covered, the monitor is capable of an astonishing number of shades and tones, so it makes sense to ensure that it's displaying these accurately.

Like many of its BenQ brethren the SW2700PT offers a good range of height adjustments – you can have it squatting low and streamlined or pull it up by another 13 centimetres. Depending on your height and that of your desk, this can make it feel somewhat domineering, especially if you've clad it in the anti-glare hood that it comes with. This attaches to the monitor using Velcro strips; when not in place two of these languish on the top of the frame. Fortunately they're made of Velcro's softer surface, so there's less chance of catching your sleeves on them and inadvertently adjusting the monitor's viewing angle in passing, but like all Velcro they are dust magnets. Of course, if you're the type that fills their studio or desk space with a collection of designer toys then they're perfect for fixing your little monitor-buddies onto your screen. This sort of thing can be a real plus for some designers.

Changing the height of the monitor is a simple business – there's no straining to heave up a heavy screen from its base, as the spring-loaded mechanism makes it a breeze to move up and down, and the movement itself is smooth and without any judder. The monitor's height can be locked in place with an old-fashioned switch so that it'll stay exactly where you want it.

The viewing angle can be pushed up, down and around, and swivelled to 35 degrees each way, and you can pull the monitor up to its full height and spin it into portrait format. Again, this is great for photo editors and retouchers especially, but many other artists and designers would find this functionality useful. Web designers in particular would find working on Artboards in Photoshop CC a lot more user-friendly with less scrolling involved.

Despite being designed primarily for photographers and imaging professionals, the SW2700PT comes with a little gizmo that lets you change its display profile easily. The OSD controller is a little circular remote with four main buttons (one functioning solely as Back), a radial controller and an OK button, that lets you switch effortlessly between presets for entertainment, working and even a very cool black-and-white mode, which sounds old-fashioned, but is excellent for high-end photographers who've shot in monochrome and want WYSIWYG editing results rather than the hit-and-miss ones that Desaturate can offer.

The SW2700PT has its own colour-calibration software – Palette Master Element – which you can download from the BenQ website. You'll need one of a selection of supported colour calibrators though (see the boxout for more details), but then, if you're the kind of imaging pro that's considering this monitor, the chances are that you'll have one anyway. It's worth doing this every so often – the monitor's colour accuracy is Delta E<2, so even with its pin-sharp QHD display and 14-bit Look Up Tables it can be slightly off every now and then. But at this price, it's hard to find fault – you could pick up a colour calibrator with the money you save.

VERDICT

Features: **8/10**
Ease of use: **9/10**
Quality of results: **9/10**
Value for money: **9/10**

FINAL SCORE: 9/10

COMPATIBLE COLOUR CALIBRATORS



X-RITE i1 DISPLAY PRO £193

This multi-use calibrator from the experts at X-Rite is designed for both desktop screens and laptops. Its Intelligent Iterative Profiling technology means that it measures and analyses monitors based on their unique profile, so you get the most accurate results. It's fairly expensive, but as it can also calibrate iOS and Android tablets and phones, and supports broadcast video standards, it's an essential investment for small studios and all-round designers.



X-RITE i1 PHOTO PRO 2 £1199

The X-Rite i1 Pro 2 range comes in three different options – Basic, Photo and Publish, but given that this is a monitor designed for photographers we've chosen to concentrate on the Photo option. This complete kit isn't cheap, so it's best suited to full studio environments that need an all-round high-end device, which can calibrate cameras, monitors, projectors, scanners and printers as well as phones and tablets.



DATACOLOR SPYDER 4 PRO £146

The best value of the bunch (and probably even cheaper now that it's been replaced by the newer version 5), the Datacolor Spyder 4 is a good colour calibrator for small studios, freelancers and serious hobbyists alike. It's just for monitors and laptops, so if you regularly work in print or across multiple devices it may be worth considering one of the other options. If you just want to ensure your screen is accurate though, it's perfect.

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- Windows 7 and above
- Photoshop CS5 and above

\$180 / £117 (APPROX)

As artists, we're inspired by the world around us, and never more than when it comes to colour. The ability to grab a colour and use it quickly and easily in our artwork is certainly attractive, which is why Adobe's Color CC app is so popular. But what if there was a

device that combined the quick-snap ease of use of Color CC with the professional capabilities of a colour calibrator, able to detect colour much more precisely than an iPhone camera, and express it as hex, Pantone and other professional colour systems?

Other companies have tried, but the devices they produced were unwieldy. The pocket-sized SwatchMate Cube, however, offers the best of both worlds. Small, light and portable, it's nonetheless capable of scanning colours accurately – simply sit it on or press it against the colour you want to scan – and it scans colours with an average accuracy of 1.0 delta-E. That's the smallest colour differential that the human eye can see – to put it another way, the

SwatchMate Cube is so precise that even if its reading wasn't entirely accurate, the difference between the colour you want and the colour it scanned would be too subtle for you to physically see.

Colours are then sent over to the Cube Companion app, giving you a luscious swatch of the hue you want together with precise colour information that you can use in your mobile CC apps and add to your swatches and libraries, or import straight into Photoshop via the Cube Link application. Far more accurate than simply colour picking and hoping, the SwatchMate Cube will express your chosen tones in the colour-library lingo of your choice, so you're guaranteed precision with every swatch you scan.



The light in the top corner lets you know when the Cube's in action, while the largely invisible touch button beside it lets you control it

VERDICT

Features: **8/10**
Ease of use: **9/10**
Quality of results: **9/10**
Value for money: **6/10**

FINAL SCORE: 8/10

A user-friendly way to quickly and accurately capture colour, but despite its portable size, the price means you'll need deep pockets

COREL PARTICLESHOP

DISCOVER THE POWER OF INTUITIVE BRUSHES WITH PHOTOSHOP PLUG-IN, PARTICLESHOP



www.painterartist.com

PLATFORMS:

- Mac 10.9 and above
- Windows 7 and above
- Photoshop CS5 and above

£40 / \$50

The beauty of a plug-in is that it adds something completely different to Photoshop: sometimes something that you can't create in the program without a lot of care and attention. Plug-ins, like actions, can be used as shortcuts. We all know that you can create the impossible in Photoshop, and sometimes plug-ins can help you realise such fantasies. What makes a good plug-in then is a combination of two things: efficiency and effect.

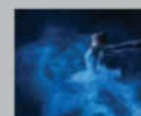
ParticleShop is a strange beast in this respect. It looks like a plug-in, but it feels like an extension to

Photoshop, like it's building on existing tools. While you might download ParticleShop expecting to get quick, effective results in a matter of minutes, it's a much more complex piece of software than that, it's one that's more about trial and error than it is about keying in coordinates to create effects.

ParticleShop looks simple enough to get the hang of; it's simply the Brush tool from Photoshop with added intuition. When creating smoke or fire for example, ParticleShop projects spidery dots, which are connected by lines of colour, and moving your cursor can alter the direction and consistency of these lines. From here, you can create incredible-looking effects that you would usually need tools like the Pen or Liquify to painstakingly re-create. It's a fantastic concept, but it's not one without its flaws.

Initially, ParticleShop is difficult to get the hang of. The seemingly random motions with which the brushes seem to flail about are hard to control, let alone paint with, and it does seem more like luck

TOP 5: ADDITIONAL BRUSH PACKS FROM COREL



DUST AND DEBRIS £25 / \$30

One of the more subtle packs available, Dust and Debris is perfect for adding tiny particles onto a blank layer before masking exactly where you want them to show.



LIGHT IT UP £25 / \$30

Great for light trails, the Light It Up pack can create all kinds of light effects from fantasy to simply enhancing the natural light in a picture.



HAIR £25 / \$30

The hair pack is great for portraits. Again, subtlety is the key with this one, but should you have a graphics tablet, it's easy to add smooth, believable highlights to your subjects with the power of ParticleShop.



SUPERHERO £25 / \$30

A pack with the 'Wow' factor, Superhero allows you to create all kinds of fantastic energy, light and flame effects that you would have to search all over the internet for, should you wish to create the same effect in Photoshop.



SPACED OUT £25 / \$30

One for creating nebulae or brightening up night skies, the Spaced Out pack contains all kinds of brushes perfect for injecting colour into dark photos. Use it in conjunction with the Storm pack for added drama.



■ HOW TO CREATE SIMPLE EFFECTS

CREATE A FEATHERY DRESS EFFECT IN THREE SIMPLE STEPS USING PARTICleshop



01 | INITIAL BRUSH STROKES
Start off by grabbing a brush, in this case the Fabric brush, and begin making preliminary strokes over the picture, first in a line, and then in a sweeping motion in the direction you want your effect to follow. Experiment with speed, length and brush size until you get the hang of it.



02 | BUILD UPON IT
Once you've created a basis, ParticleShop has plenty of brushes that can enhance your piece even further. Grab a different colour and play with brushes to create a multi-layered effect. We even added subtle highlights to the hair. A graphics tablet comes in useful with ParticleShop, but just fling your cursor to try and create something unique.



03 | ADJUST TO FINISH
The effects that you can add to pictures with ParticleShop are not always the subtlest. It's a piece of software that doesn't have layers, so it's important to touch up your picture afterwards with any adjustment layers that you see fit to blend your new effects into the rest of the picture naturally.

“Once you start to think of ParticleShop more like an upgrade to the Brush tool though, you can start to really craft your images”

than judgement when trying to create sometimes. There are small niggles too, which add slightly to the frustration; you can't pick a colour easily, you can't see layers below the one you're working on and the processor can seem slow.

Once you start to think of ParticleShop more like an upgrade to the Brush tool though, you can start to really craft your images. It's a plug-in that really benefits from you taking the time to be detailed and precise with what you're creating: it's

not a quick fixer. You can download extra brushes, you can use brushes for things they perhaps weren't intended for – the Fabric brush makes a great sci-fi force-field – and there's hours of fun to be had playing with this program.

Ultimately, fun is perhaps the best way to describe ParticleShop. It can be useful, it can look magical, but the real enjoyment comes from the crafting. It's not too far from Photoshop in that respect, after all.

VERDICT

Features: **9/10**
Ease of use: **5/10**
Quality of results: **10/10**
Value for money: **8/10**

FINAL SCORE: 8/10

An extension more than anything else, ParticleShop is capable of the magical, so long as you have the patience

FROM ARCHITECT TO ARTIST

ARCH-VIS EXPERT SOUHEIL ABDESSELAM EXPLAINS HOW HE USES PHOTOSHOP AND 3D PACKAGES TO CREATE HIS SPECTACULAR VISIONS

Designer and 3D artist Souheil Abdeslam gave up being an architect and turned to creating arch-vis pieces for the unlimited freedom that can be achieved with digital artistry. He revels in the fact that his work is no longer dictated by budget and the constraints of the real world, and now his only real worry is his polygon count.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR STYLE?

I think my style relates to fantasy art with a touch of a cinematic feel. Through the years, you explore and discover what your strengths are, and keep evolving and working on them. It's also important for an artist to be able to create different things in different fields. I have learned that a wide skill set will make you more favourable.

WHEN DID YOU START USING PHOTOSHOP?

More than fifteen years ago. After seeing what other artists could do with Photoshop, I decided to learn it. In fact, I was required to know how to use it, in order to be hired [as an architect]. The learning curve was fun and

each time I learnt a new trick, I would use it right away in a real project situation.

YOU TRAINED AND WORKED AS AN ARCHITECT, TELL US HOW YOU CAME TO MOVE INTO DIGITAL ART?

Through my career as an architect I have noticed that architecture became very limited with budget issues. Look around you and see how architects had more freedom in past times. I couldn't design boxes anymore, and I found an unlimited freedom with digital art, where you can create worlds, and the only thing I would care about is the polygon counts. The other major thing is the job prospects. When you have that, employers can offer you other jobs and I took the challenge. One shouldn't be afraid of re-creating yourself and exploring what other things you can do.

WHAT ARE YOUR FAVOURITE OR MOST-USED PHOTOSHOP FEATURES?

I use the Curves tool a lot. Among other things I also use the design space, the Dehaze tool (which is a new one in



OUR READER
SOUHEIL
ABDESSELAM

www.arcad977.wix.com/zenati



Living Room:
Arch-vis is really evolving," says Abdeslam, and higher and higher standards of realism are required

All article images © Souheil Abdeslam

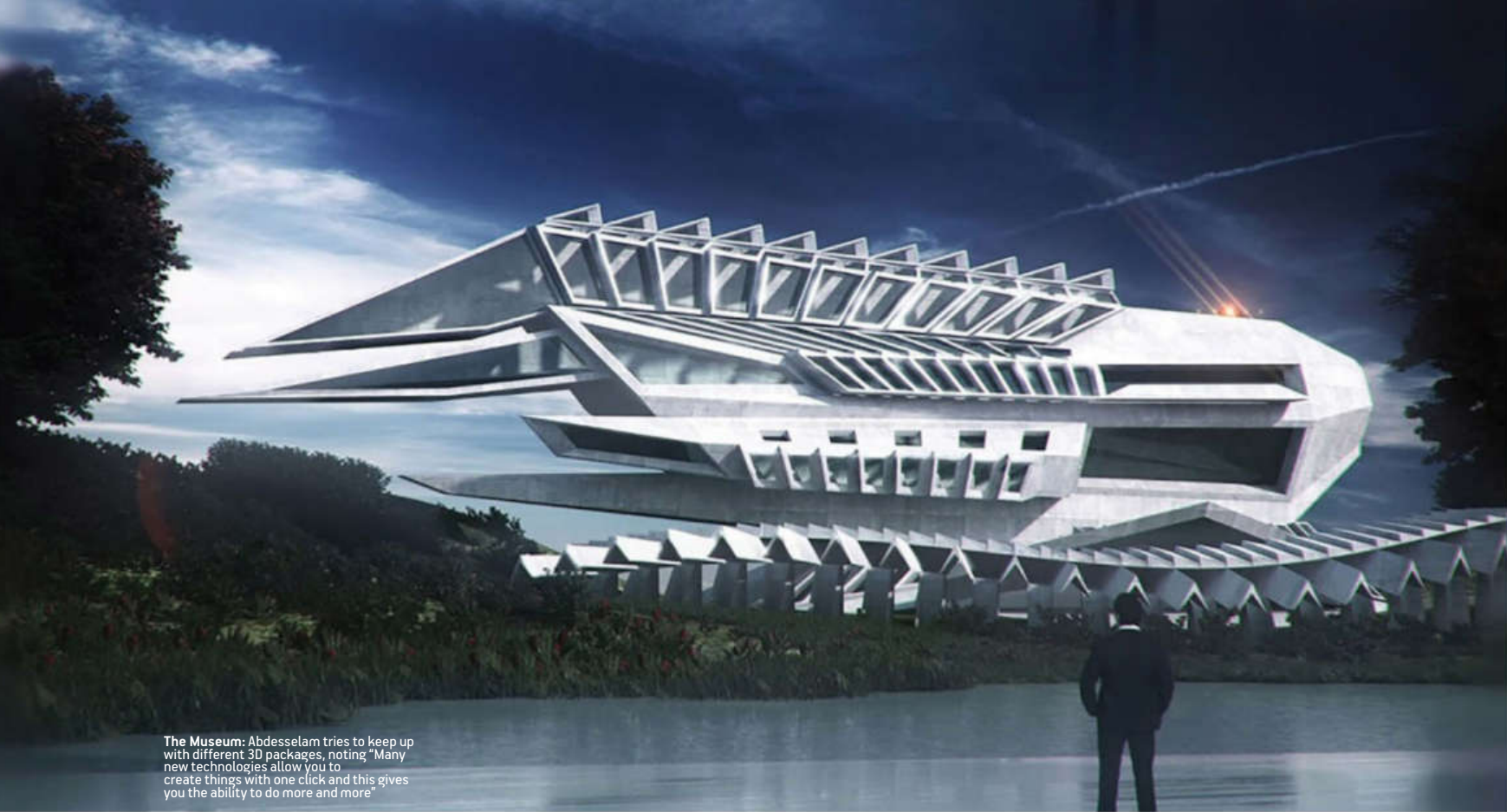


Amira Castle: Abdesselam is inspired by sci-fi and medieval architecture. He lists Dylan Cole, Antonio Gaudi, Michael Carrigan and his father as his favourite artists

Living Room V2



“ I couldn't design boxes anymore, and I found an unlimited freedom with digital art, where you can create worlds, and the only thing I would care about is the polygon counts ”



The Museum: Abdesselam tries to keep up with different 3D packages, noting "Many new technologies allow you to create things with one click and this gives you the ability to do more and more"



Season City



God Rays: "Colour harmony and lighting," are two things that Abdesselam strives to focus on

“Early in the morning, things start with a strong coffee and some nice ambient music, and after reading my emails, I start reviewing my sketches and see what kind of approach and technique would do the job”

DC Beach: Abdesselam thinks it's always good to know more applications than just Photoshop: "Widen your skillset. There is no such thing as a perfect application, and instead every app complements the other"





CC version), Levels, and custom brushes, and the turbo charged Patch tool. I tend to create colour corrections using the Color Balance along with Blur filters.

WHICH OTHER SOFTWARE PACKAGES DO YOU USE, AND HOW DOES THAT FIT WITH YOUR PHOTOSHOP WORK?

I use 3D Studio max for 3D modeling, and Vue infinite to create terrains. My preferred render engines are V-Ray and Mental ray. All my post-production work is done with Photoshop. In my workflow there is a lot of back and forth between these applications. I usually start with a concept that I block out using Photoshop, then I would use it as a reference in my 3D package. Many tools within Photoshop like perspective would help me to create the vantage point I am aiming for. I also use photographs to create plates or what we call cards when creating 2.5D work. I usually output my renders to formats like Open EXR, were I use full float 32 bits; this gives my renders a lot of potential; and when going lower bits-wise everything will blend smoothly. I usually render passes and then stack them up in Photoshop, and that's where the fun begins. I like to create different feels and use a lot of colour correction; I would create at least two final renders and then ask for feedback. It's recommended that you will take a break before deciding which one to go with, this will refresh your perception and help you spotting any issues in your work.

WHAT'S A TYPICAL WORK-DAY FOR YOU?

Early in the morning, things start with a strong coffee and some nice ambient music, and after reading my emails, I start reviewing my sketches and see what kind of approach and technique would do the job.

At the moment I am doing 3D for prototypes, and two-thirds of my daily time will be spent with different 3D applications.

Lastly I would make renderings and enhance with Photoshop. Other days I would invert the workflow, especially when the clients want something fast, like a concept. This will see me doing photo-bashing with Photoshop the whole day long.

THEN AND NOW

Dubai 2040 is an old image of Abdesselam's, while Ark-scape is recent. "What I like about them is the fact that you can create a whole new cityscape concept, mixing 3D with photographs (also called

camera mapping). The most challenging and fun part was not only blending colors from photographs and 3D renderings, but also how you can make everything getting along within a perspective's almost perfect vanishing point." The new tools within Photoshop CC have made it much easier for Abdesselam to achieve things that were "very difficult if not impossible" before. "Like taking out the haze with one click, forcing photographs to fit in, shape and colour wise, re-sizing photographs without losing the quality and so on. I am taking less time doing things with much better quality."



ARKSCAPE



GATHER THE PROJECT MATERIALS

ESSENTIAL RESOURCES FOR CREATING FABRIC TEXTURES



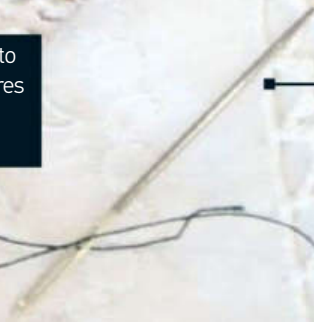
Thread: A contrasting colour of thread in case you want to capture stitches as a part of your texture



Lens: A zoom or macro lens to get in really close and capture the most amount of detail

Fabrics: Of course you are going to need a variety of fabrics for textures –silk, lace and denim – anything with visible texture

Needle: A needle to sew your stitches, and mend any fabric if necessary, you can also use it to sew down the fabric



CREATE YOUR OWN FABRIC TEXTURES

FIND OUT HOW TO CREATE AWESOME TEXTURES FROM EVERYDAY FABRICS

Designers and Photoshop users are always on the lookout for useable textures. Collecting textures is an ever growing process. From clouds, to coffee stains, anything can be a texture, but few textures are as easy to find as fabric. The texture of cloth is immensely

useful for making digital art from canvas texture, all the way to photo manipulations through displacement maps. Fabric is everywhere in our lives, our bedrooms, bathrooms, living rooms, and even on our bodies. But how often do we think to actually capture these textures? Most people do not realise the resources

they already have inside their homes, so why not learn how to take advantage of them? In this tutorial, you will learn to photograph the fabrics in your home so they can be added to your resource library. This tutorial is inexpensive to do because of the availability of the supplies so there's no reason not to try it.

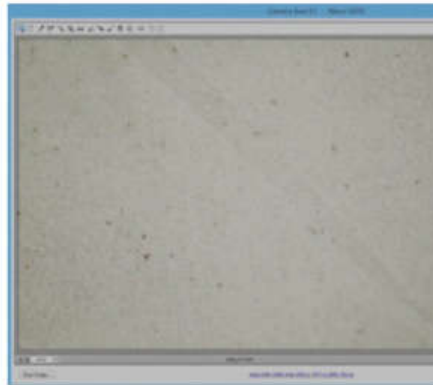
BASIC FABRIC PHOTOGRAPHY

LEARN HOW TO CAPTURE TEXTURE FROM FABRICS AROUND YOUR HOME



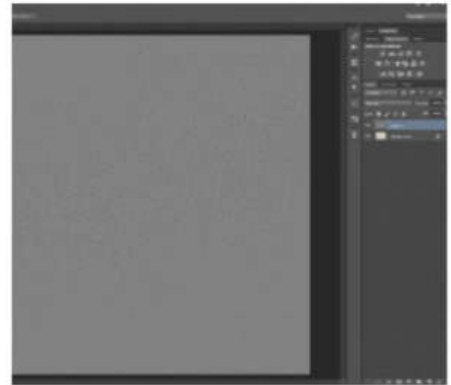
01 SET EVERYTHING UP

The setup for this project is super simple. Hang your fabric over a chair or other vertical surface and place your tripod four or five feet away so the zoom lens will focus. Make sure you have plenty of light.



02 DO SOME BASIC EDITING

Once you photograph your texture, use the Camera Raw settings to raise the clarity of the photo. This will bring out the little bits of texture that you wouldn't normally be able to see.



03 USE A HIGH PASS FILTER

Open your image in Photoshop. If the texture isn't strong and defined enough use the High Pass under the filter menu. Push the slider over to four or five, then set the mode to Overlay.

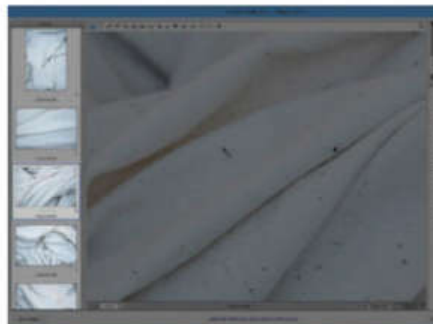
FOLDED AND FUNKY FABRICS

DISCOVER HOW TO PHOTOGRAPH FOLDED AND OTHER ODD FABRICS



01 ARRANGE YOUR FABRICS

It's very easy to photograph folded fabric. All you really need is soft, diffused lighting so you don't have harsh shadows, and a tripod to ensure crisp photos. It's best to use an unprinted fabric with a moderate amount of texture.




02 CHOOSE A VARIETY

Make sure you take a variety shots of different folds. Try twists, folds, crumples, and pleats. It only takes a second to rearrange the cloth. Try different amounts of fabric in the shot as well for even more versatility.



03 SCAN LACE

For lace and other odd fabrics and linens, simply scan them. They will lay flatter, and be nice and crisp in the resulting images. The background of the scanner is should be plain enough not to cause a distraction.

The image is a collage of six different fabric textures. The top row features three panels: a close-up of blue denim with a diagonal twill weave, a close-up of light blue silk with a fine, irregular texture, and a close-up of light pink silk with a more pronounced, wavy texture. The bottom row features three panels: a close-up of light beige linen with a coarse, regular weave, a close-up of light green linen with a finer, regular weave, and a close-up of dark grey/black linen with a very fine, dense weave. Each panel has a black text box with a white line pointing to a specific feature of the fabric.

TYPES OF FABRIC

THE NITTY GRITTY OF FABRIC TEXTURES

Depending on the amount and type of texture you want, you will need to photograph different types of fabric. Here's the rundown on how each fabric looks close up.

Denim: Denim is a very thick texture, it runs diagonally and often has bumps, which add to the texture of its surface. Older denim will often be thinner and occasionally can fray

Silk: Raw silk is the quintessential fabric texture for a canvas look, it's moderately bumpy and often contains small flecks of other colours, which add to the interest of the pattern

Linen: Linen is also a great fabric for texture. This is a thicker, tighter weave of linen, it is relatively stiff, and so it will hold its shape and will lie mostly flat

Linen weave: A finer, thinner linen weave is more translucent and will blend with photos more easily than a thicker fabric. You can also pull at it to adjust the areas of thickness for more interest

DIGITAL EMBROIDERY

CREATE A FUN STITCHED FABRIC EFFECT

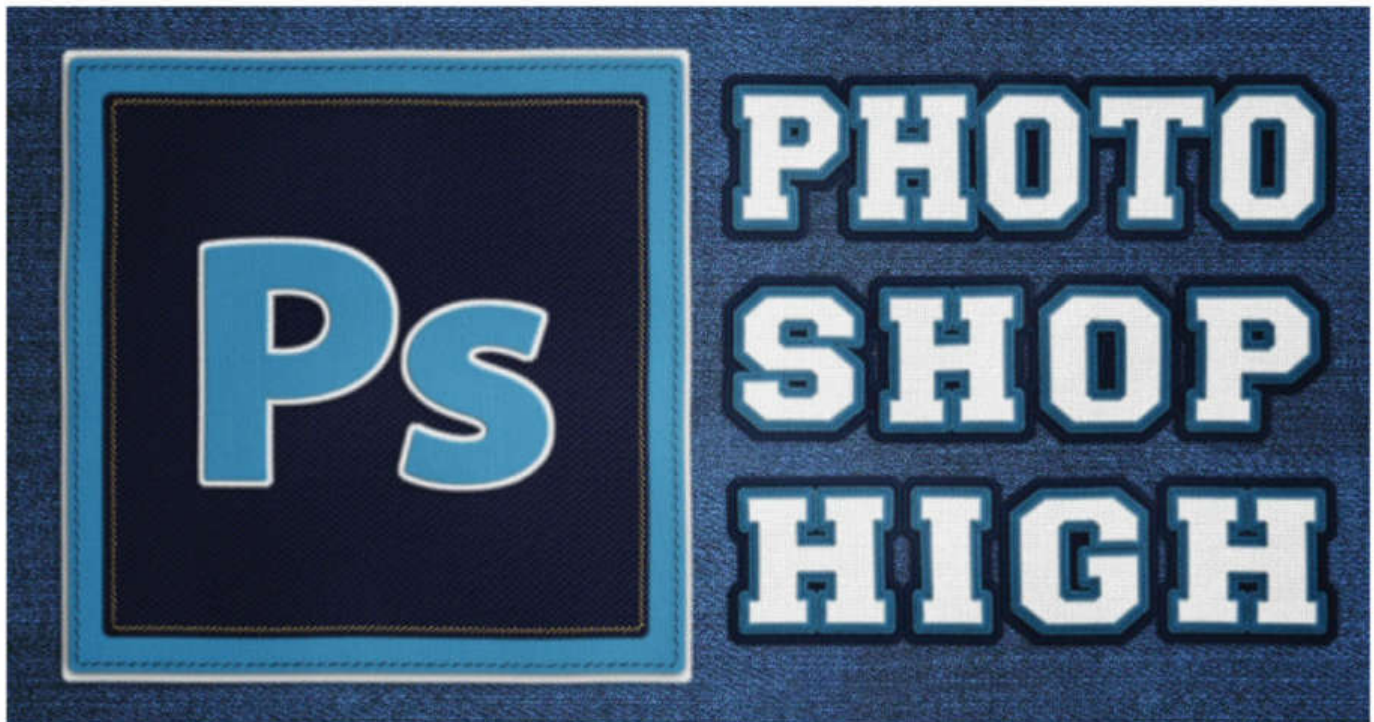
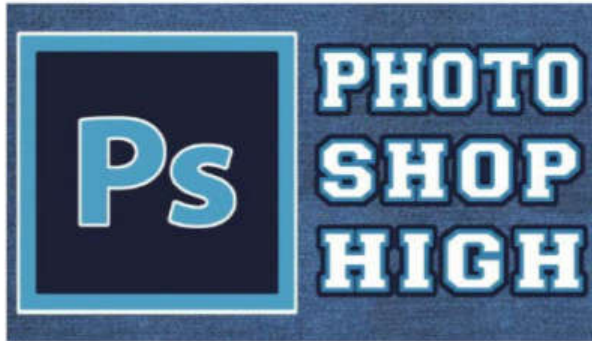
Using the fabric textures is a fun way to craft a digital piece of stitched artwork. Start with some simple overlapping squares and cutout letters. Photoshop actually comes with several fabric patterns already available. Open the Layer Style box and add a Pattern Overlay style, Open the

Pattern Picker menu and then use the Gear menu to add the Artists Brushes Canvas to your pattern library. Use one of these patterns set to overlay at a lower opacity to give a fabric texture to the shape.

Then add an Outer Glow style set to Normal and the same colour as the shape, the trick here is to

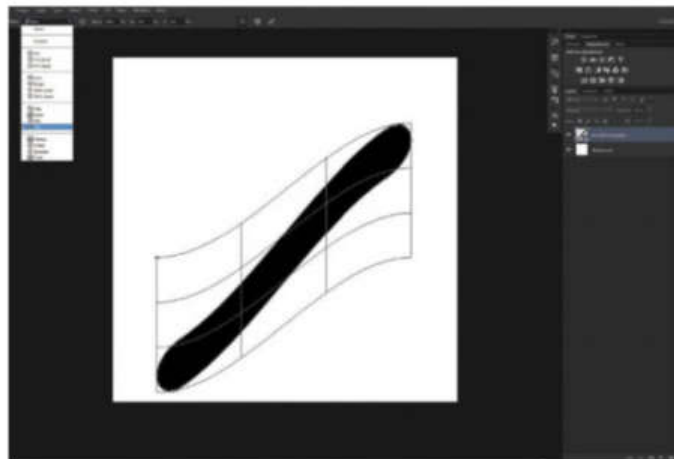
increase the noise value until the fabric edge looks fuzzy. Then a slight drop shadow will give the cloth a bit of depth. Use the Thread brush to add stitching all around to finish off the piece.

There's a more detailed video tutorial of this project available on FileSilo.



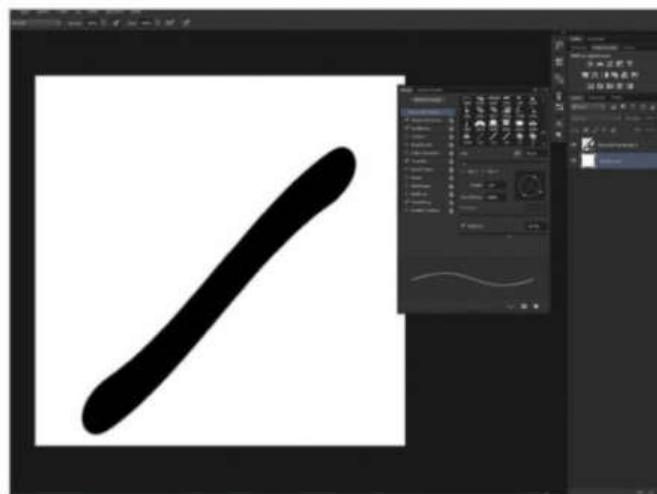
CREATE YOUR OWN DIGITAL STITCHING

LEARN HOW TO CREATE A CUSTOM STITCH BRUSH



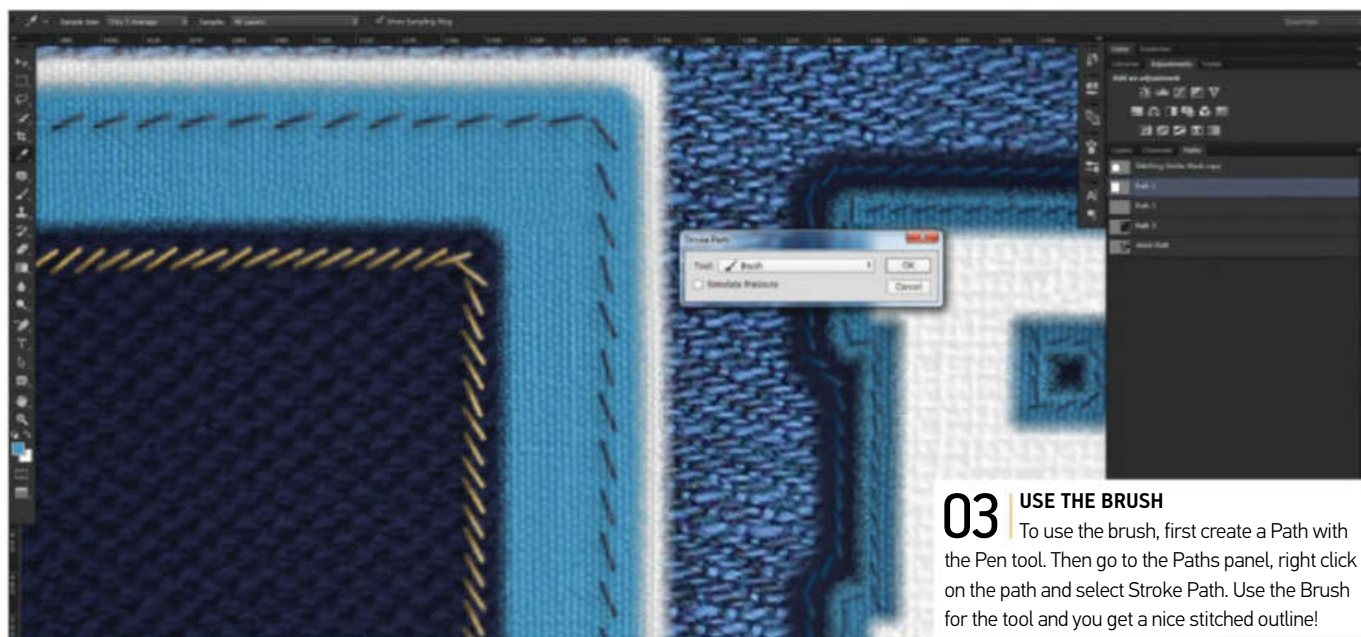
01 MAKE THE BASIC SHAPE

Start with a blank file and create an elongated rounded rectangle. Skew the rectangle to be diagonal and then use Edit>Transform>Warp. Pick the Rise Warp to give the shape a bit of a curve.



02 DEFINE THE BRUSH

Go to Edit>Define Brush to add this brush tip to your library. Then open the Brush panel and increase the spacing and decrease the size until the brush appears as stitching.



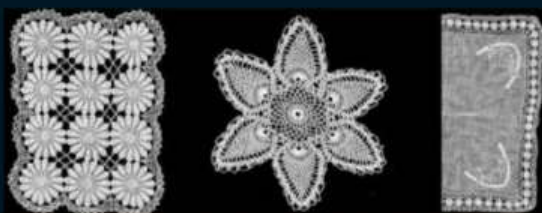
03 USE THE BRUSH

To use the brush, first create a Path with the Pen tool. Then go to the Paths panel, right click on the path and select Stroke Path. Use the Brush for the tool and you get a nice stitched outline!



VIDEO TUTORIAL

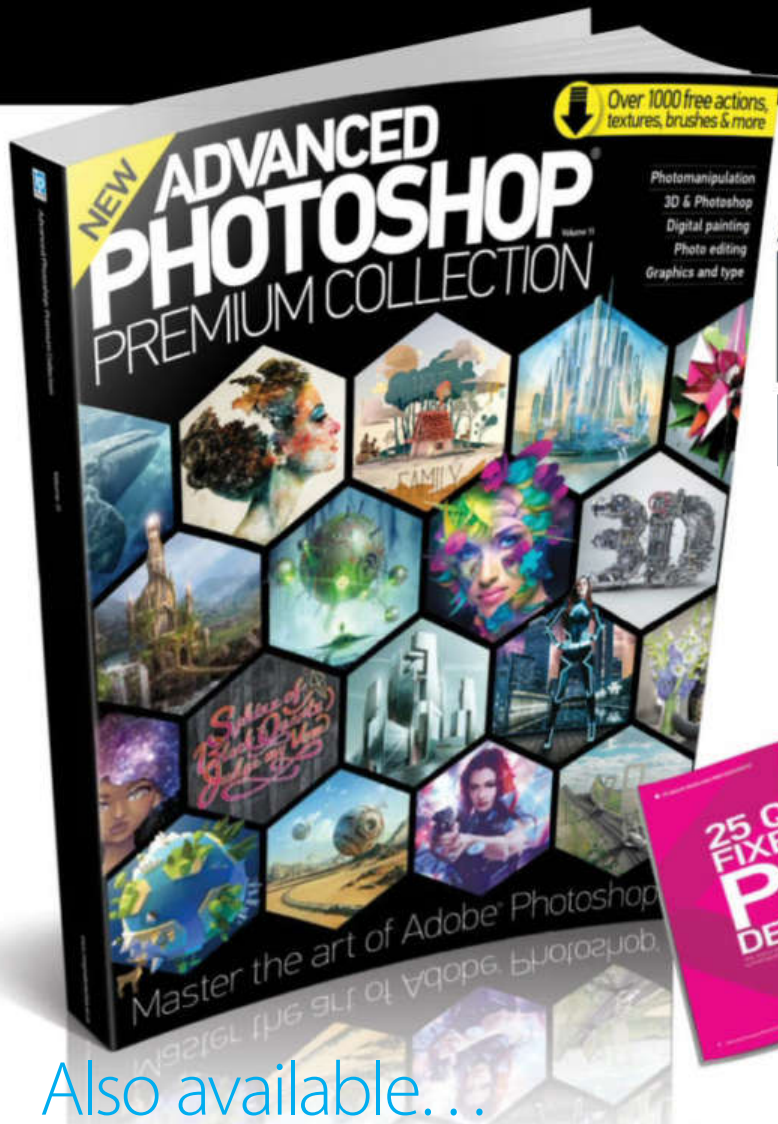
MAKE FABRIC INSPIRED ARTWORK
Use textures to create a realistic stitched denim effect.



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From the makers of **ADVANCED PHOTOSHOP**

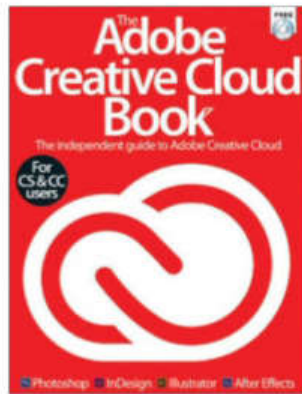


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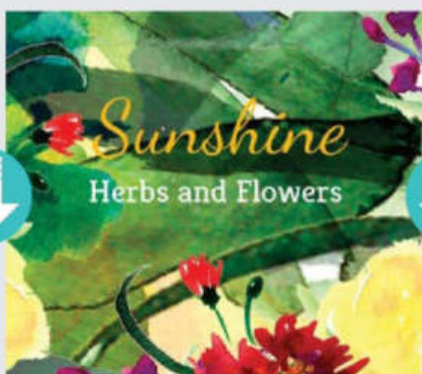


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